

Local Government Muscles In

california

JOURNAL

SEPTEMBER 2004

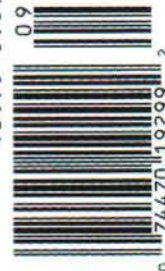
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Improving Public Schools and Teaching Remains an Important Goal for CTA

By Barbara E. Kerr, President, California Teachers Association

The California Teachers Association was founded 141 years ago because teachers wanted to improve their professional skills and support better public schools. Today, CTA is the largest public employee organization in California, and these goals remain important to our association and to the 335,000 educators we represent.

Most people know that CTA works hard to help attract and keep good teachers by fighting for fair pay and benefits. However, many people don't know the major efforts we undertake to help teachers build their skills, or the work we do to build partnerships with parents and communities to build strong public schools and give every child an opportunity to learn and succeed.

Helping the Schools of Greatest Need

One example is CTA's creation of the Schools of Greatest Need Initiative and the Institute for Teaching. The main focus of the initiative is to help schools where kids are at the greatest risk of failure.

Working with businesses such as Staples, professional sport teams like the Golden State Warriors, and community groups, we are supporting stronger ties between schools and the neighborhoods they serve.

In Sacramento, we are working with the Pacific Institute for Community Organization (PICO) on teacher home visits to encourage more family support for homework and attendance.

In the greater Los Angeles area, we have formed partnerships with the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) and the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) to bring parents, teachers and the community together to improve student achievement.

Providing Quality Teacher Training

Each year CTA offers hundreds of intensive training sessions for teachers to help them improve their clas-

room skills. From tips for classroom management to ways to assist students who don't speak English, these workshops are recognized for their quality and effectiveness.

CTA also offers two conferences each year designed to give teachers opportunities to study and share best practices for teaching in our diverse and ever-changing world.

Thousands of teachers attend these conferences because the instructors are the best of the best, drawing from classroom teachers, counselors, librarians, and resource specialists. The conferences allow participants to learn and discuss what works — and what does not.

Improving Public Schools

CTA's commitment to improving public schools is deep and long-standing. It's why we led the fight to get voter approval for more than \$34 billion in state bonds to upgrade and rebuild our public schools. It's why we continue to work to give classroom teachers more say in how decisions are made in our schools.

And it's why we will continue to work with parents and community organizations to help make California schools the best they can be and to ensure that every student succeeds. It is simply who we are and what we do.



Barbara E. Kerr, a Riverside elementary school teacher, was elected president of the California Teachers Association in 2003. She has been a California public school teacher for 30 years.



Leaving kids behind

Not all of California's K-12 students are getting equal educations — or even clean bathrooms — as a landmark lawsuit painfully reveals. **By Sigrid Bathen**



At the table

Local governments were aggressive political players in this year's budget, but not everyone believes the result was good public policy.

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Fresno mayor Alan Autry, a former pro quarterback and actor, was the unlikely lead for the League of California Cities' budget negotiations.

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Mark Drummond, the state's new chancellor of California Community Colleges, is a man on a mission. **By Rich Ehsen**

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State prisons have been blasted for medical care that is costly, cumbersome — and even dangerous — to its inmate patients.

By John Howard

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They're old, often sick and sometimes dying. As the state's prison population ages, these graying inmates pose dilemmas for state officials.

By Jonathan Jones



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The state of California maintains a treasure trove of rare artifacts, from stagecoaches to cradles, that's largely unseen by the public.

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Embarrassments

This month's issue of *California Journal* highlights two situations that every Californian ought to consider shameful. Our cover story, written by former senior editor Sigrid Bathen, exposes the shabby conditions that many of the state's most vulnerable children must endure just to attend a public school. Worse, school officials — from the state superintendent of public instruction on down

— seemed little inclined to do anything about those conditions until they were sued. Another story, by senior editor John Howard, analyzes the appallingly incompetent — and overly expensive — system that delivers health care inside the state's 33 prisons, and the often-fatal consequences to inmates incarcerated there. Finally this month, we begin a new feature, written by Anthony York, which takes a look at California's political "Movers and Shakers."

A. G. Block



Cover photo: Getty Images



Will the California State Universities still be here when it's their turn to go to college?

Millions have received degrees from the California State University. California relies on CSU's graduates; and CSU graduates contribute more to California's economy. But ten years of declining state support has put our university system into jeopardy.

- \$311 million cut last year
- \$200 million cut this year

For the first time we slammed the doors on thousands of qualified students. Thankfully, the legislature, led by Assembly Speaker Fabian Nuñez, restored funding for some of these students. But the funding crisis continues.

**We must stop the bleeding now
or there will be nothing left for our children.**

It's time to renew our commitment to their dreams and their opportunities.

For the sake of California's future it's time to rebuild the CSU!

For more information, please contact the California Faculty Association
400 Capitol Mall, Suite 1950, Sacramento, CA 95814
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Steve Thompson

I first met Steve Thompson in 1980, and it was immediately apparent that this was an unusually intense human being, deeply committed to his cause. I had no idea that he was a high-powered member of the legislative staff, or an expert in health policy, or a confidant of then-Speaker-to-be Willie Brown Jr. His "cause" at the time was as coach of a woman's softball team, and my wife had been recruited to play third base. Steve spent every game clinging to a chain-link fence in front of the dugout, mop of hair half obscuring his eyes, cigarette dangling from his lips, screaming encouragement — among other things — to his team, bouncing moment-to-moment between euphoria and despair. I came to know his other incarnations after joining the *Journal* in 1983 and discovered that the intensity and energy he brought to coaching permeated every aspect of his life and made him a gifted and respected citizen of Sacramento's Capitol community. He also was a great friend of this magazine because he considered it a worthwhile endeavor, and for personal reasons because his sister, Dagmar Thompson, is our longtime art director. Thompson, 62, died on August 17, only two months after being diagnosed with cancer. His sagacity, his intensity, his energy and his commitment to public service will be deeply missed. — A.G. Block



Initiative by Seuss?

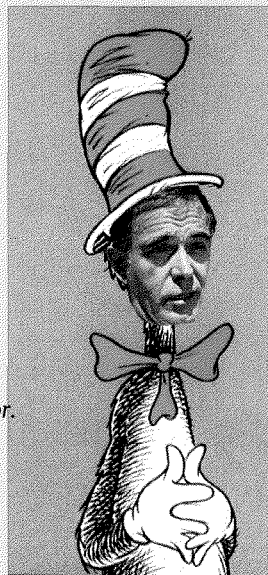
Ted Costa, the anti-government activist who launched the recall of former Gov. Gray Davis, has submitted an initiative to create a part-time Legislature. But one part of Costa's proposal seems a bit odd. It requires the Legislature to convene each year on the first Monday of January, then spend "not more than 90 days" considering "legislative matters" in "open and public proceedings" — likely, committee hearings and floor sessions. But the session does not end until June 30. Does this mean lawmakers can meet in secret the rest of the time? The language is fuzzy on this matter, almost as though it was concocted by Dr. Seuss. Here's our version of Costa's proposal:

*They've grown far too big, they've grown far too grand
So it's time to rope them, to bind them by hand.
These Capitol folk are here far too much
So we'll shrink them, by golly, and so forth and such.*

*My idea is simple, it's really quite keen.
We'll create a Legi-ma-Costa-machine.
We'll start it in January, stop it in June.
What a fantabulous, greglorious, stupendulous boon!*

*They shall not, they will not do anything brash.
They shall not, they will not do anything rash.
They shall meet in public for three months — not four.
And the other three months, they can just close the door.*

*Do we know what they'll do with the door shut tight?
Doesn't matter to me — if they stay out of sight.
So, here's to the Legi-ma-Costa-machine!
It's sure to help Arnold sweep the Capitol clean.*



Correction: In our story on the Minnie Awards (*CJ*, August 2004), we misidentified Assemblyman John Dutra (D-Fremont) as "Jim Dutra." We sincerely apologize, for it marks the umpteen-millionth time we've made the same mistake. At this point, it would be easier on us if the assemblyman simply changed his name.

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Editor:

A.G. Block

Managing Editor:

Claudia Buck

Senior Editor:

John Howard

Contributing Editors:

Lou Cannon, Sherry Bebitch
Jeffe, Susan Rasky, Marc
Sandalow, Dana Wilkie

Art Director:

Dagmar Thompson

Art Staff: Scarlet Shin

Advertising Representative:

Tim Foster (916) 552-7005

Advertising Coordinator:

Erica Pahl (916) 444-2840

Founding Publisher:

Thomas R. Hoeber

Board of Directors:

Barry Munitz (chair),
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J. Paul Getty Trust

Lou Cannon, journalist
and author

R. William Hauck,
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Business Roundtable

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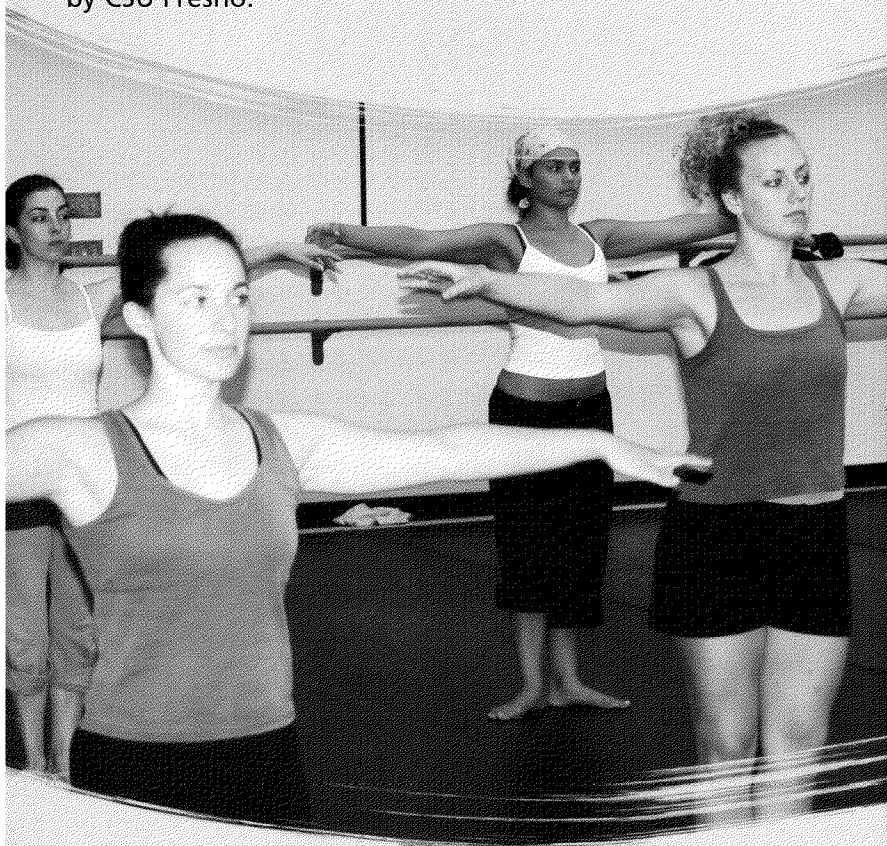
Hon. Pete Wilson,
former governor

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Your California Lottery Funds at Work...

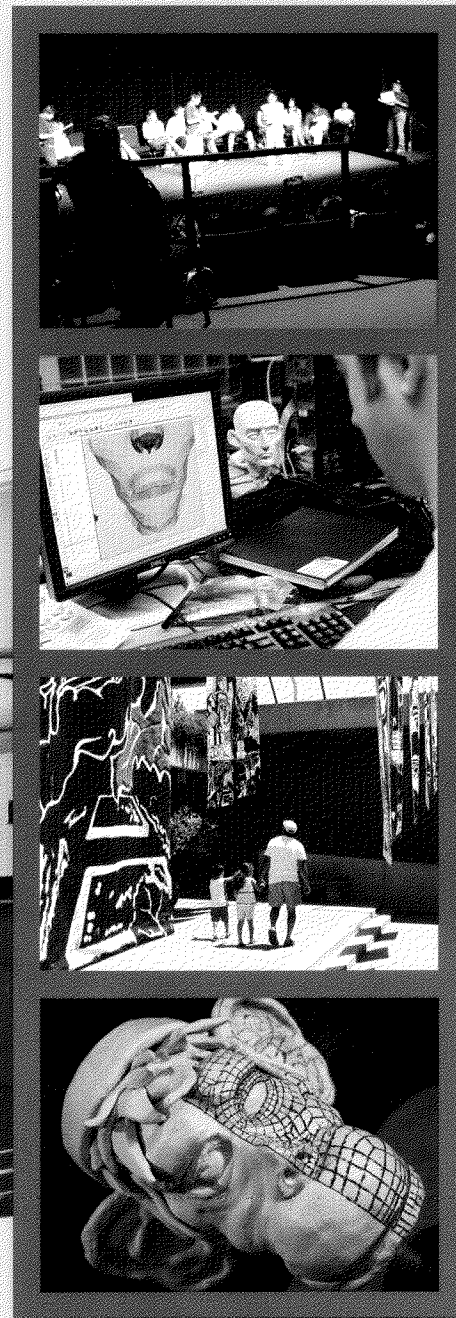
California State University Summer Arts

With the help of supplemental Lottery funds, each summer students from throughout the CSU system have the opportunity to participate in a two-week academic residency course for undergraduates, graduates, and professionals in creative writing, dance, music, film, video, theatre, performance, visual arts, design, arts education, and new technology. CSU Summer Arts is currently hosted by CSU Fresno.

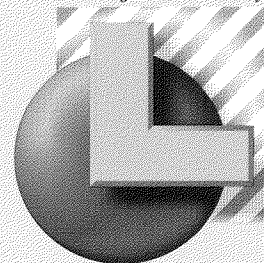


The California Lottery... doing our part to support California schools since 1985.

Last year the California Lottery generated over \$1 billion in supplemental funding for California's public schools for the fourth consecutive year. Supporting over 8 million students at all levels of education, Lottery funds provided district administrators with an extra \$125 per student giving them the flexibility to maintain valuable programs including fine arts and class-size reduction and buy updated textbooks and library materials.



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Washington Outlook:

From 9/11's tragedy

It wasn't contained in the 567 pages of the 9/11 commission's report but California Congresswoman Diane Watson (D-Los Angeles) may have come up with one of the more practical ideas in the aftermath of the tragedy. Speaking to family members of 9/11 victims at a Washington, D.C., congressional hearing last month, Watson suggested that the grieving families take a page from another tragedy that occurred in Sacramento, California. Noting that MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) was launched by a mother whose child was killed by a drunk driver and has since become a powerful lobbying force nationwide, Watson urged the 9/11 families to adopt a similar model and form chapters nationwide to lobby their representatives on national security and other issues. "I know," said Watson, "that something good is going to come out of this tragedy."



Congresswoman
Diane Watson

Bat Bridge:

Rooms for rent

If Bela Lugosi hung out under bridges, this would have been it: The 54-year-old Franklin Bridge on the Sacramento-San Joaquin County border. The flood-damaged span, a popular bat haven, is being rebuilt with lots of room for batty inhabitants, which are welcomed by farmers and environmentalists. In what may be a first statewide, local officials set up temporary bat rooms to keep the winged critters from

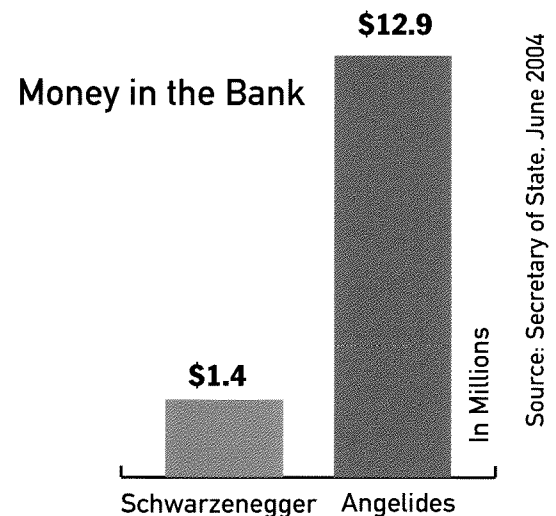


leaving before the new bridge, which will have nesting spaces for 600,000 bats, is completed. Until then, the bats are just hanging out — or under.

Campaign Watch:

Running up the money for 2006

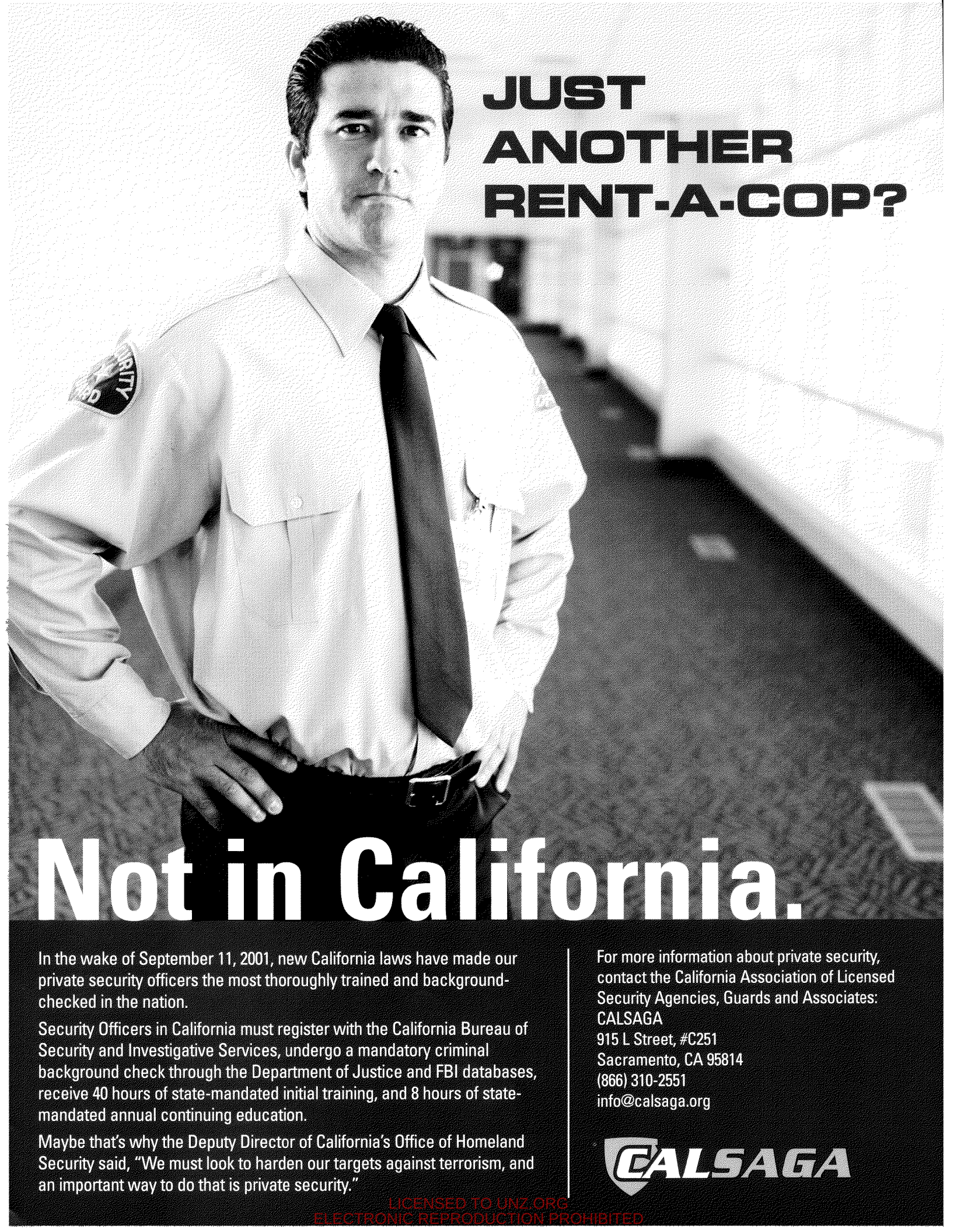
Two years out, they're rivals for the next governor's race: incumbent Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger and Democratic state Treasurer Phil Angelides, his sharpest critic. Since his election, Gov. Schwarzenegger has raised roughly \$19 million for various campaigns and ballot measures, much of which has been spent. Here's how their campaign coffers stack up, according to the most recent filing deadline:



Quotables.....

"On a very personal level, the legislators feel outmatched, a little overwhelmed...I think we've gotten pixillated."

— Carole Migden, state Board of Equalization member and former legislator, commenting on Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's effect on state lawmakers in *The New Yorker*, June 2004

A black and white photograph of a man in a security uniform. He is standing in a hallway, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. He has his hands on his hips. He is wearing a light-colored, long-sleeved button-down shirt with a dark tie. On his right sleeve, there is a patch that says "SECURITY". The background is a blurred hallway with a carpeted floor and walls.

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Security Officers in California must register with the California Bureau of Security and Investigative Services, undergo a mandatory criminal background check through the Department of Justice and FBI databases, receive 40 hours of state-mandated initial training, and 8 hours of state-mandated annual continuing education.

Maybe that's why the Deputy Director of California's Office of Homeland Security said, "We must look to harden our targets against terrorism, and an important way to do that is private security."

For more information about private security, contact the California Association of Licensed Security Agencies, Guards and Associates.

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(866) 310-2551
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A graffiti-covered bathroom at Jefferson High School, L.A.
Photo: Courtesy of the American Civil Liberties Union



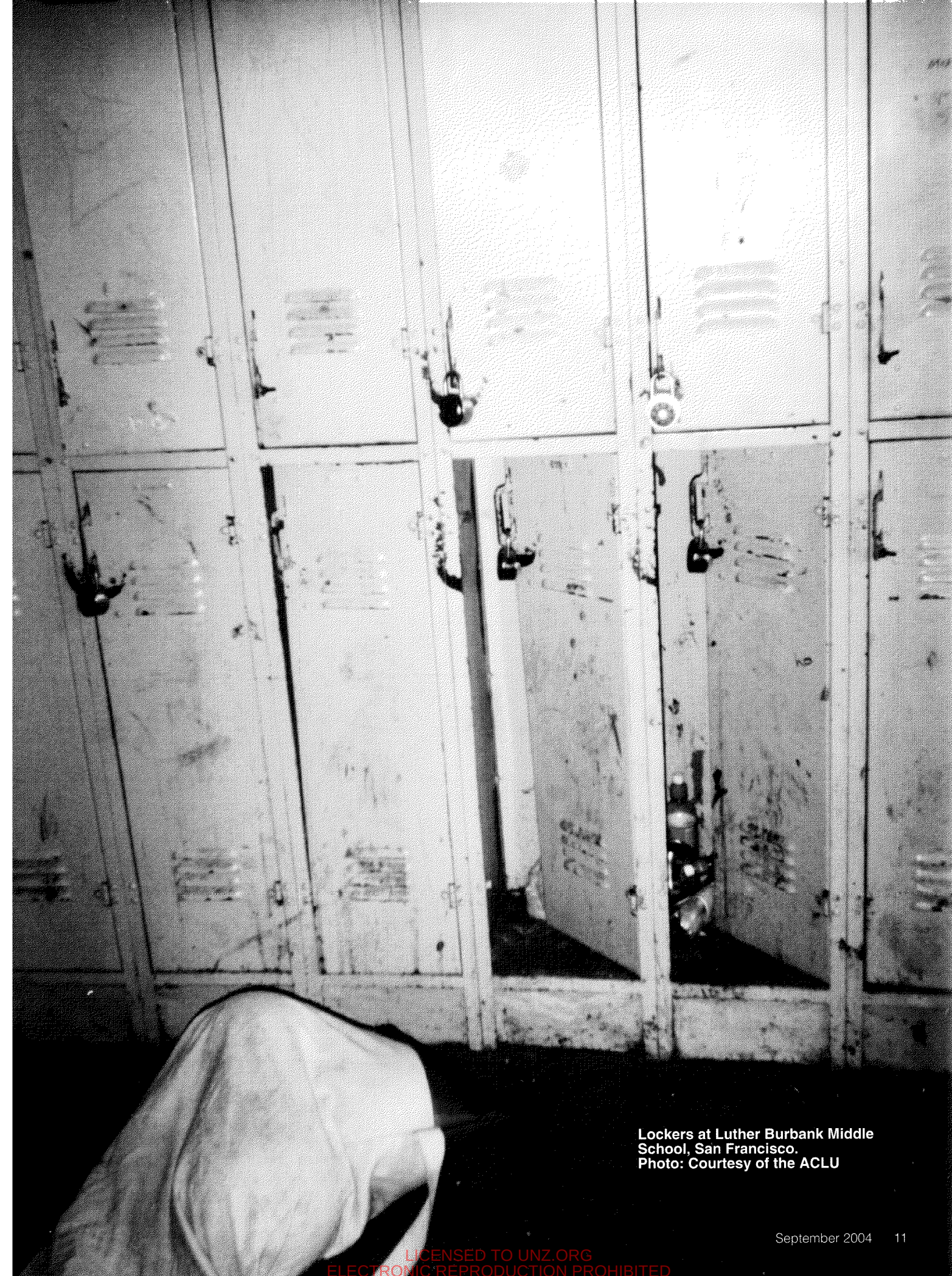
The 'Mississippification' of California schools

Fifty years after the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* held that discrimination in education is unconstitutional, a distinctly two-tiered educational system persists in California. The state's fractured educational system continues to struggle with the realities of substandard schooling for many California children. By Sigrid Bathen



When Moises Canel, Magaly de Loza, Yeimi Alba, Arturo Escutia and Edgardo Solano attended Wendell Helms Middle School in San Pablo, California, conditions in the public school were appalling.

In fact, Helms was beyond horrid. Ceiling tiles were cracked and falling, and the roof leaked. Eighteen of the 59 teachers lacked full teaching credentials. There were not enough textbooks. One algebra class had no books at all; students had to copy problems from the blackboard. The gym was unusable on



Lockers at Luther Burbank Middle
School, San Francisco.
Photo: Courtesy of the ACLU

rainy days. Toilets did not work. Bathrooms, which only rarely had soap, toilet paper or paper towels, were strewn with used condoms, cigarette butts and empty liquor bottles. Most of the stalls in the boys' bathrooms were missing doors.

Conditions at Wendell Helms landed the school on a select list of 46 schools named by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in a class-action lawsuit — *Williams v. California* — that challenged the stunted educational opportunities and decrepit, filthy facilities attended by thousands of poor California children, predominantly children of color.

For page after damning page, the lawsuit described horrific conditions in schools from Los Angeles to Oakland and points in between. The anecdotes are painful to review: elementary school students in Fresno who “have urinated or defecated on themselves” because “one of the school bathrooms is locked all day, every day.” High school students in San Francisco with only one four-stall bathroom open for girls in a school with 1,200 students. “A soiled feminine napkin and a moldy ice cream bar remained in one of the stalls for the entire 1999-2000 school year.”



At the heart of the ACLU suit is a simple premise: provide students from poor families with inferior educations, and they are likely to be permanently consigned to the bottom rungs of the socioeconomic American dream — undereducated and ill-trained to survive in the competitive workplace, much less thrive or go to college. The fact that most are children of color, predominantly Latino and African-American, further belies the promise of equal educational op-



**The dilapidated gym ceiling at Mark Keppel High School in San Pablo.
Photo: Courtesy of the ACLU**

portunities embedded in American law and policy.

The suit was settled in a tentative agreement announced by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and the ACLU last month. Under the agreement, the state will set aside up to \$1 billion to repair deteriorating facilities in 2,400 low-performing schools, plus \$139 million this year for textbooks, and another \$50 million to assess facility needs. It also sets up a system for students, teachers and parents to report complaints, and for county education

superintendents to monitor compliance. The agreement requires legislative and court approval.

"Mississippification" of education

Author and columnist Peter Schrag, an expert on education issues, has deemed the decades-long decline of the state's public schools the "Mississippification" of California education. Legal and education experts who have spent years, sometimes decades, fighting substandard conditions for poor, minority children in California's schools say the characterization is apt.

"I've been working on this case for more than four years. I've met the kids, gone to the schools, talked to the teachers," said Catherine Lhamon, the ACLU's principal attorney in the *Williams* suit. "I have been aghast at what I've seen. The conditions are so horrendous. ...The message we're sending to these kids is that they are worthless, that the state does not expect them to succeed, that they are deemed to be an underclass."

Lhamon worked with Dr. Michelle Fine, a psychology and education professor at the City University of New York who has been researching and writing about inequities in the public schools for two decades.

Fine conducted detailed interviews with 101 students of all ages and grade levels, gathered in small "focus groups" at schools throughout California. Eighty-six of those students also completed anonymous written surveys. "The evidence suggests that the more years they spend in their schools, the more shame, anger, and mistrust they develop; the more academic engagement declines, and the

more our diverse democratic fabric frays," she concluded.

Fine asked students to describe an "ideal school." The responses were poignant, because their own schools were so unlike the ideal.

Said one girl in a Los Angeles middle school: "It would be a classroom with enough tables, enough chairs, enough books, enough materials, and a teacher who cares. ...I would have a teacher that understands where kids are coming from, especially living in the area that we do."

The girl also described what the ideal school principal was not: "... Not the principal coming inside the classroom and going like, 'Shut up. You're going to listen to what I've got to say right here,' and that's the same way they treat us. We are the same, just because we're smaller and don't know as much as they know, we are the human beings."

At a Los Angeles high school, a girl responded to the same question: "Enough books. And enough desks in the classroom. And a big enough class[room] ... Our classes are so crowded, and you can't really learn anything because if this person has a problem and somebody else has a problem, she try to help this person out and this side of the room starts talking and it really takes up time to learn."

And another Los Angeles high school student: "I don't really feel like they're preparing me for what I have to do after high school, because I don't even have a math class because they say all the math classes are too crowded. So I don't get math this year."

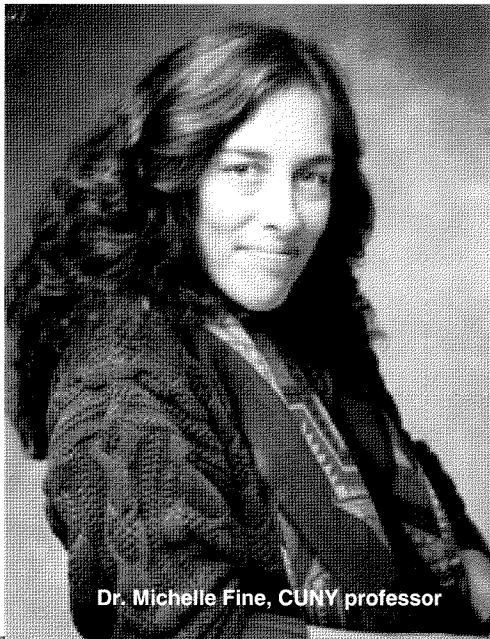
A high school boy in Alameda: "I mean, am I getting the same treatment as these more wealthy schools are

A day in the life of an urban school

Students at Jordan High School in Watts write messages on t-shirts in remembrance of friends and family who have been touched by violence. "Throughout this year, we had to endure a variety of setbacks," wrote English teacher Sean Leys in a recent article on the Web site, "Teaching to Change LA," an online journal of UCLA's Institute for Democracy, Education & Access (IDEA). "Another year's worth of killings. . . [including] the gang-related murder of a Jordan student. We discovered the neighboring scrap metal yard, which accidentally launched a World War II artillery shell on the campus last year, has also been piling toxic materials next to our field. Students have been eating lunch on ground with 20 times the safe levels of lead and arsenic." After the gang-related murder, Ley wrote, the class he teaches in grass-roots organizing held a lunch-time peace rally with presentations by community leaders working to reduce gang violence, music commemorating victims of violence and students handing out white T-shirts on which to write "messages of peace, forgiveness and remembrance for the people in their lives who had been touched by violence."



Photo courtesy of "Teaching to Change LA," UCLA/IDEA Institute, www.tcla.gseis.ucla.edu



Dr. Michelle Fine, CUNY professor

getting and they getting all this new equipment, this new gym, all this stuff, everything, the facilities getting fixed up, and we getting the same old hand-me-down stuff?"

Whose fault?

How did these schools — and others — deteriorate so badly, and who is responsible?

the keys to solving the riddle of school improvement.

In a scathing report on findings by a panel of experts hired by the ACLU, Dr. Jeannie Oakes, a professor in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Los Angeles, and a national authority on socioeconomic and educational disparities in schools, said the state "has failed to provide ... basic educational tools to many, many school children."

"Most often, these are children who are poor, non-English speaking, African American and Latino," she added. "It is unacceptable that the educational system would deprive any California child of these basics. It is reprehensible that those children most deprived educationally are also those who society neglects most in other ways."

Resolution of the *Williams* suit has been a tortuous, contentious and expensive process, spanning four years of legal wrangling and a mountain of paper, including a state countersuit against the districts targeted in the suit. (Much of the legal material, including depositions and

"The evidence suggests that the more years they spend in their schools, the more shame, anger, and mistrust they develop; the more academic engagement declines, and the more our diverse democratic fabric frays."
— Dr. Michelle Fine, City University of New York

"Accountability" is a popular buzzword in education circles, but it usually applies to test-score performance attributed to classroom teachers and rarely to administrators and elected officials who oversee schools. In this case, there is plenty of blame to go around. Superintendents, administrators, teaching staff, teachers' unions, elected school boards and the parents of the children themselves all share responsibility.

Accountability for the horrific conditions described in the *Williams* suit is a trip down the proverbial rabbit hole, complicated by California's complex system of education governance and finance (an elected superintendent, Jack O'Connell, who heads a state education department, plus an appointed state board of education and an education secretary to the governor, Richard Riordan) as well as the sheer size of the state and its K-12 student population (last count: 6.5 million students in some 9,000 schools overseen by 1,000 elected local school boards, plus 58 county offices with elected boards). "Money and management" are most often cited as

expert testimony from all sides of the complex case, is available on the ACLU website, www.decentschools.org). Some estimates place the cost to the state at more than \$20 million, including millions paid to private lawyers hired by the administration of former Governor Gray Davis, who made education reform a cornerstone of his administration.

As the ACLU's top expert, Oakes endured 17 days of depositions. "I've been studying these issues for a long time," she said in an interview, "but this was really quite extraordinary." She said she was "dumbfounded and surprised" by the Davis administration's response to the lawsuit. "It appears the suit was taken very personally, that somehow this was against him, that he had done bad things. It seemed like a farsighted administration might view this case as an opportunity ... to do something heroic."

Awash in negative press, the state resumed settlement negotiations rather than take the no-win case to trial, which had been scheduled to start late last summer. When Davis was recalled in October, incoming Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger wasted little time in castigating the legal strategy of the previous administration, which otherwise had earned high marks from educators for implementing major education reforms.

"It's terrible. It should never have happened," Schwarzenegger told reporters during a June 29 press



conference at Sacramento High School. "It was crazy for the state to go out and hire an outside firm to fight the lawsuit. Fight what? To say this is not true what the ACLU is saying, that they actually got equal education? All anyone has to do is just go to those schools."

The *Williams* suit was filed in San Francisco Superior Court on May 17, 2000, the 46th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*, on behalf of some 1 million students in public schools throughout the state. Named as defendants

were the state (in the person of the governor), the state Department of Education, the state Board of Education and the state superintendent of public instruction. The lead plaintiff was Eliezer Williams, then 12 years old and a student at Luther Burbank Middle School in the San Francisco Unified School District.

There is evidence that the *Will-*



Dr. Jeannie Oakes, UCLA professor

"This is the most important civil rights issue of our time."

**— Russlyn Ali,
executive director of
The Education Trust-West**

iams suit has prodded some school districts to address their problems. Louise Renne, the former San Francisco city attorney who is special counsel for the school district, told the *Los Angeles Times* that the last five years have seen a "sea change" in improvements to San Francisco schools: Luther Burbank has been "extensively" remodeled, maintenance has improved throughout the district and more textbooks are now available.

In San Francisco, as elsewhere around the state, state educators say facility improvements have been made possible by the passage of major bond measures, including a \$300 million bond passed last year in San Francisco. Local bond issues no longer require a two-thirds majority to pass as a result of a successful ballot measure pushed by former Governor Davis and O'Connell to reduce the required vote to 55 percent.

Signs of improvement?

While few of the central factual issues in the *Williams* suit are questioned by state and local educators — they often disagree on the steps needed to effect major change.

"This is the most important civil rights issue of our time," says Russlyn Ali, a prominent civil rights attorney who is executive director of The Education Trust-West, an influential, Oakland-based education policy group. "Underachievement is not inscribed on the DNA of black and brown children. The cycle of low expectations for kids of color has to be broken."

And, while high school graduation rates — and college attendance — continue to be dismal for many poor, low-income students, particularly blacks and Latinos (see EdTrust-West charts, p. 18), Ali and others are cautiously optimistic that major education reforms of recent years are beginning to have an impact on student achievement.

"There has been improvement," says the ACLU's Lhamon, "and there is no question that passage of the bonds was an unqualified good thing for the state. But infusion of dollars alone will not be enough to satisfy the needs that are identified in the lawsuit. There are still absolutely appalling conditions in the schools, and there are management issues."

"We have to figure out ways to empower local communities to keep the pressure on, which is far more preferable



Russlyn Ali, executive director,
The Education Trust-West

to hiring a myriad of state monitors," says Kevin Gordon, executive director of the California Association of School Business Officials. "When that kind of local politics is injected, you can see change pretty quickly. One of the big issues in the recall of the Sacramento school board was the cleanliness of bathrooms. To this day, there is a heightened level of sensitivity to bathroom maintenance in that district."

Veteran state education official John Mockler, who has held numerous top positions in the state education bureaucracy and is now a private education consultant, says both "money and management" are central to addressing the disparities in public education. "Why do some schools have books, and others don't?" he asks. "That's management, but it's money, too. When people say money doesn't matter, I look 'em right in the eye and say, 'Good, give me

yours.”

“The bottom line is partly dollars, but it is also creating an environment in which people want to work,” says Dave Gordon, Sacramento County superintendent of schools. “All kids should have access to a quality facility, adequate books and teachers; that should go without saying. At the same time, I’m very worried about some elaborate compliance mechanism which will have the effect of draining even more resources ... leaving [schools] awash in paper-work.”

Marion Joseph, a former top state education department official, served on the state Board of Education for five years under two governors — Republican Pete Wilson and



David Gordon, Sacramento County Schools superintendent

“We have to figure out ways to empower local communities to keep the pressure on, which is far more preferable to hiring a myriad of state monitors.”

— Kevin Gordon, California Association of School Business Officials



Kevin Gordon, CA Assoc. of School Business Officials

standards” for all students, she insists those standards must be paired with equally rigorous teacher training and administrative accountability.

“Obviously, you want clean bathrooms,” she says.

“Obviously you want more money for textbooks, but what books? There must be a system in place where the textbooks are those that will, in fact, bring results, as well as training programs for teachers and coaching of teachers.”

Joseph and other veteran state education experts point to schools in low-income areas that have excelled, usually with strong principals who maintain quality programs and facilities.

“The job of the schools is not that complicated,” says Nancy Ichinaga, a former state Board of Education member who became an education legend in the 26 years she served as principal of Bennett-Kew Elementary

School in Inglewood. “Our job is to teach the kids how to read and how to write and how to do math,” she said.

With a predominantly Latino, black and low-income student body, Bennett-Kew under her leadership has been a “high-achieving” school with a teaching staff whose average length of service is more than 16 years. “I made sure the bathrooms were clean,” Ichinaga adds, “or I went and cleaned them myself.”

“My feeling is that if the kids come from wealthy homes, it makes the job easier. But if the kids come from poor homes, they will learn. Kids will learn whatever you teach them. ... We focused on teaching our kids to learn how to read and do math as well as those kids in Beverly Hills. That’s what we’ve always done.”

Clearly, the standards set by Ichinaga and other principals in low-income areas of California are a far cry from the schools targeted by the ACLU. Despite some signs of improvement, the troubling conditions revealed by the Williams lawsuit still persist.

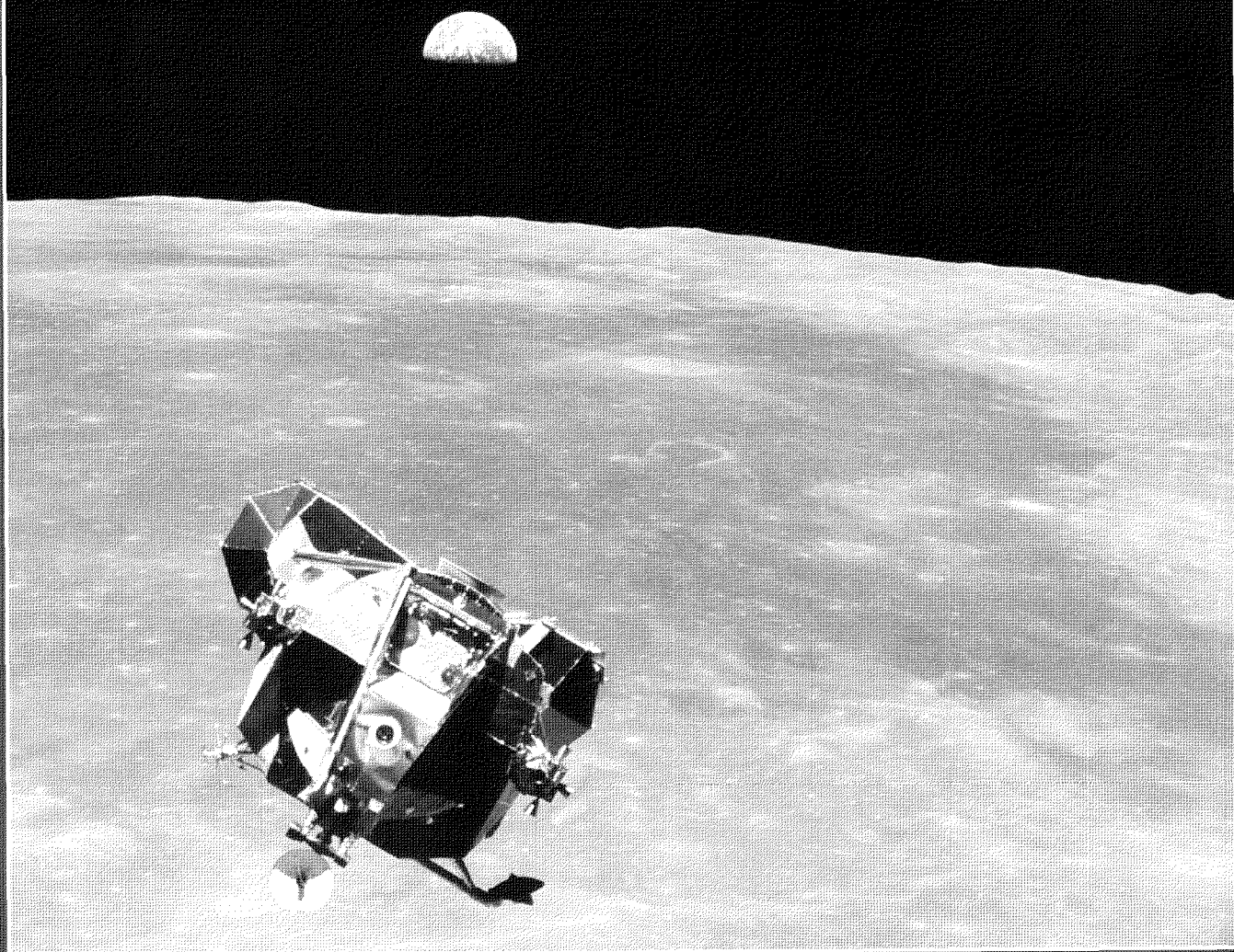
“Since the filing of the lawsuit,” says O’Connell, “we have made some real, positive steps forward in our schools.”

Perhaps we have. The question, which O’Connell was asked but did not answer, remains: Why did progress require a lawsuit? 

Sigrid Bathen is a longtime health and education writer who teaches journalism at California State University, Sacramento. She currently is media director for the state Fair Political Practices commission. Send comments to comments@californiajournal.org



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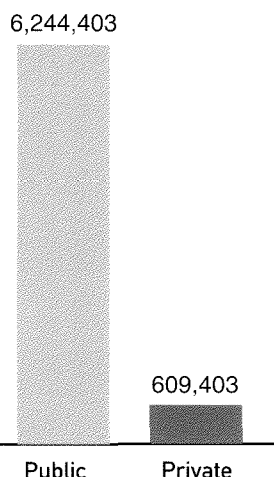
By the Numbers:

Public Schools 2002-2003

Number of School Districts	
Unified	327
Elementary	566
High	92
TOTAL	1,056
Number of Public Schools	
Elementary	6,456
Middle	11,183
High	1,006
K-12	93
Continuation	522
Alternative	241
Community Day	305
Special Education	123
TOTAL	9,087



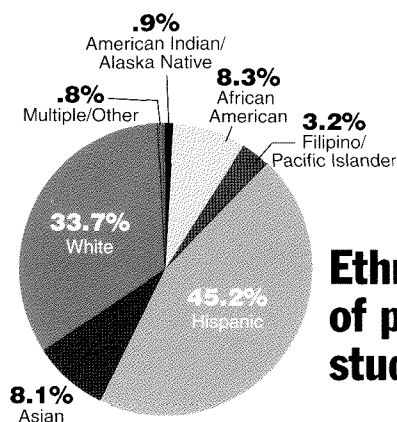
Students Enrolled: Public vs. Private Schools 2002-2003



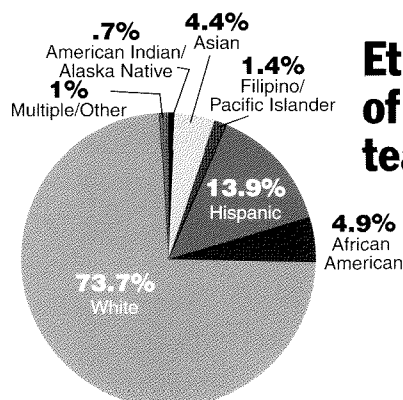
Examining High Schools

When it comes to equal education for its public high school students, many California schools are not making the grade. A recent study by The Education Trust-West, a California branch of the national policy institute, looked at three indicators: graduation rates, course completions and student achievements. The results show that California high schools are shortchanging many students by not helping them master rigorous classes, by not ensuring they graduate after four years and by not offering enough college-ready coursework. There are some notable exceptions, however, which also are noted. For the complete details and analysis, visit the Web site at: www.edtrustwest.org

RICH DISTRICT, POOR



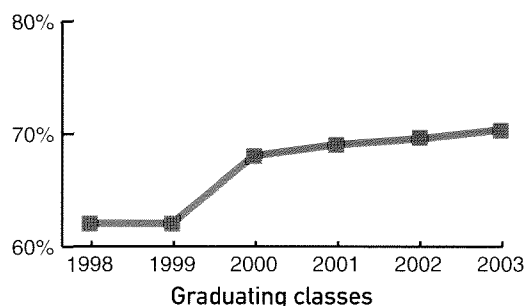
**Ethnic breakdown
of public school
students**



**Ethnic breakdown
of public school
teachers**



Graduation rates improve, but only slightly



One of the best indicators of high school completion is comparing the number of high school graduates with the number of ninth graders who started four years earlier. By that calculation, about one-third of CA students do not earn a high school diploma. Although the state's graduation rate has improved slightly, roughly 150,000 students each year do not remain in school long enough to graduate, according to The Education Trust-West.



DISTRICT

Raising the roof on graduation rates in California

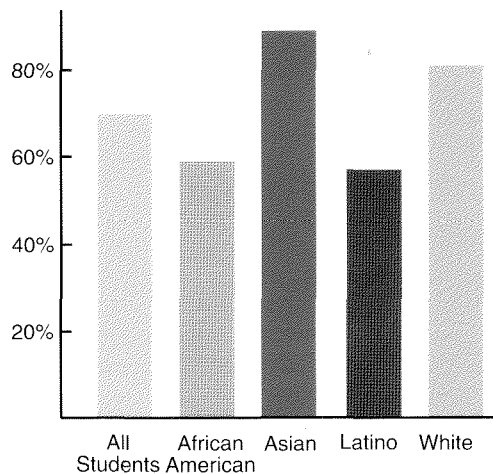
Several school districts have defied the statistics and dramatically boosted their high school graduation rates. The three shown below attribute their success to high standards and rigorous academics that insure all kids have a chance to succeed.

	High school students receiving free/reduced-priced lunch	African American and Latino students	9th graders who graduated four years later, class of 2003
North Monterey County Unified	40%	53%	91%
Bassett Unified	71%	94%	81%
Garden Grove Unified	54%	54%	80%
State Average	34%	53%	70%

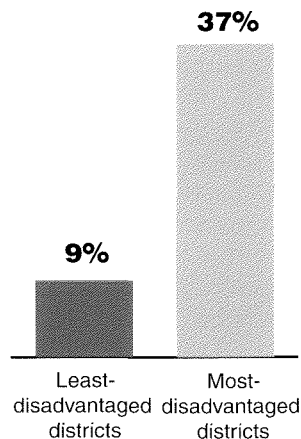
Sources: CA Dept. of Education, The Education Trust-West, 2004

Graduation gaps by ethnicity

There are large disparities in high school graduation rates among CA's ethnic groups. For graduating seniors in 2003, the gap was pronounced: Roughly 80% and 90% of white and Asian students graduated, compared with fewer than 60% of African American and Latino students.



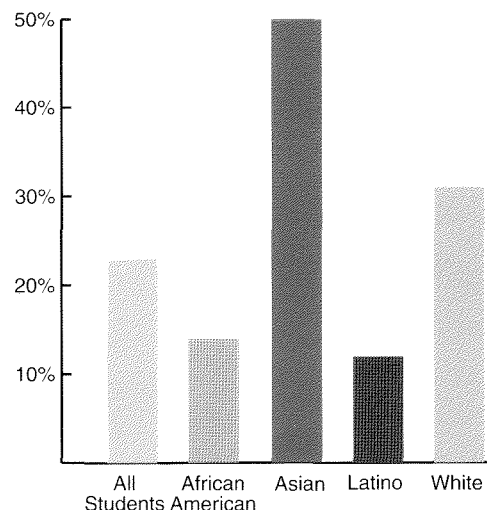
All curriculums not equal



In California, only one in six (17%) of public school districts make available to all students the necessary coursework to be qualified for the state's four-year public colleges and universities. Among the "most disadvantaged" districts (those with the highest poverty levels, lowest parent education levels and lack of English proficiency), only 9% give their students the opportunity to complete college-level classes.

Unprepared for college

To be eligible for college, high school students must have mastery of so-called "A-G" courses, including English, math, history and foreign language. In CA, fewer than one in four students have successfully completed the required courses. Among African American and Latino students, the numbers are even lower.



california JOURNAL

Independent analysis of politics & government

September, 2004

Dear Reader,

California Journal published its first issue in January 1970. Our mission was to provide an independent, monthly voice that would improve public policy and governance by reporting and analyzing state government decision-making, and by educating elected officials and others about how those decisions affect ordinary citizens. We have remained faithful to that mission for 34 years. The *Journal* has won awards and plaudits for its effort and is recognized as the nation's premier magazine devoted to the government and politics of a single state.

California and *California Journal* have reached a crossroads. For the state, a celebrity governor has energized citizen interest in public affairs and politics to levels not seen for many years. But for Californians to benefit from this energy, interest must lead to participation. This makes *California Journal's* mission more important than ever.

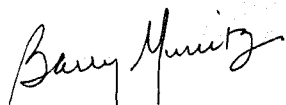
Recently, changes in business plans led to divestiture of *California Journal* by its longtime parent company. This led to our formation of a new nonprofit organization to save the magazine. The California Journal Foundation for Research and Education in State Government has assumed responsibility for the *Journal's* publishing and fundraising. The Foundation's new bipartisan board of directors is committed to maintaining the *Journal's* traditions and to finding new ways to introduce the magazine's brand of balanced, non-partisan journalism to a broader audience.

Revenue from subscriptions and advertising provide less than half the financing necessary to sustain the *Journal*, which is dependent on contributions and grants from public-minded groups and citizens for its continued existence. The foundations, organizations and individuals listed on the right have already given considerable support to this endeavor, but more help is needed.

So now we ask you, our loyal subscribers and readers, to join this effort. Please help us continue the *Journal's* mission by making a contribution today. Together, we can ensure the *Journal's* continued ability to bring you unrivaled coverage of California state and local politics and government. (Application has been made to the Internal Revenue Service for the charitable status that would make this contribution tax deductible.)

Thank you in advance for your ongoing support of the *California Journal*.

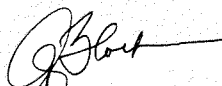
Sincerely,



Barry Munitz
Chairman of the Board
California Journal Foundation



Lou Cannon
President and CEO
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california JOURNAL

The nonprofit California Journal Foundation for Research and Education in State Government gratefully acknowledges the generosity of those whose grants, contributions and gifts have provided critical support for *California Journal* as it launches a new era in its history.

BENEFACTORS

Foundations, organizations and individuals who have given \$10,000 or more in financial support or in-kind contributions

The James Irvine Foundation

The San Francisco-based James Irvine Foundation provided major funding to continue publication of the *California Journal* magazine and to develop plans for its future development and support.

J. Paul Getty Trust

The Los Angeles-based J. Paul Getty Trust provided a major grant for ongoing support of the California Journal Foundation and continued publication of *California Journal* magazine.

LA Tomorrow

LA Tomorrow, a policy development and advocacy group based in Los Angeles, provided funding that helped California Journal Foundation offset legal expenses associated with its application for 501(c)3 nonprofit status.

The William & Flora Hewlett Foundation

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation provided major funding for the startup of the nonprofit California Journal Foundation for Research and Education in State Government and publication of the magazine.

Nielsen, Merksamer, Parrinello, Mueller & Naylor

A legal and lobbying firm with offices in San Francisco and Sacramento, Nielsen/Merksamer dedicated countless hours of *pro bono* legal work on behalf of California Journal Foundation.

California Business Roundtable

The California Business Roundtable, an organization of top business executives, provided generous staff and logistical support to California Journal Foundation.

State Net

State Net, a legislative information service and *California Journal's* former parent company, has continued its financial, logistical and administrative support to California Journal Foundation.

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Special assistance provided by The California Center, David Lyon, PublicAffairs and Gary Pruitt.

A SEAT AT THE

For the first time in recent memory, cities and counties played hardball politics over the state budget. Armed with an initiative, they got their way in negotiations with the governor and the Legislature. But not everyone believes the end result is good public policy.

By Mary Lynne Vellinga

Fresno Mayor Alan Autry has an earthy way of describing the treatment local government officials traditionally receive during budget talks at the state Capitol. Until this year, he said, any mayor heading to Sacramento "was sure to bring their proposal and their kneepads. More than likely, you were summarily dismissed. And if you made a stink about it, they threatened to remove the few crumbs left on your table."

This year, however, local elected officials tried a new approach: hardball politics. Putting aside their traditional differences, cities, counties and special districts banded together to protect their money from annual plundering by the state Legislature. Their main weapon: an initiative (Proposition 65) that they qualified for this November's ballot. The measure bars the state from further raids on local coffers unless it obtains majority approval of voters statewide.

Although many observers predicted that voters would reject Proposition 65, the coalition used the threat of its passage to bring Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to the



TABLE

Photo: David Trood, Getty Images

negotiating table. Schwarzenegger agreed to support them if they would kick in \$2.6 billion over the next two years to help dig the state out of its current fiscal hole. The revised budget he released in May contained language similar to Proposition 65.

But Schwarzenegger wasn't the only player at the table. The other participant was the Democrat-controlled Legislature, which balked, warning that putting local funds off-limits could result in cuts to social services, highways or colleges in times of fiscal crisis. But local leaders hung

together as never before, and legislators eventually agreed to a less iron-clad — but still unprecedented — deal to protect local vehicle license fees, and property and sales taxes from diversion to the state.

That compromise requires a two-thirds vote of the Legislature to suspend the protections on property taxes. If the Legislature voted to declare such an emergency, the local monies appropriated would be considered a loan and would have to be paid back with interest within three years. Language added at the cities' insistence also

would bar the Legislature from changing the amount of sales tax that local governments collect or redistributing it among local entities without voter approval.

The compromise itself still needs voter approval. As such, it appears on the November ballot as Proposition 1A. Schwarzenegger agreed to campaign for it, and potential opponents, such as unions representing teachers and state workers, appear less likely to fight it now that its provisions have been toned down.

Although local governments were

The cowboy quarterback

Fresno Mayor Alan Autry has played many roles in life: pro football player, actor, politician. But Autry assumed his most ambitious role this summer when he helped local government muscle in on the state's budget negotiations.

By Jennifer M. Fitzenberger

Fresno Mayor Alan Autry clops his way through the halls of the state Capitol in a suit, a tie and a pair of worn cowboy boots. Autry, the burly 52-year-old former Hollywood actor and professional football player who now runs California's sixth-largest city, wears his boots just about every day, especially for important occasions like pitching the League of California Cities' local government funding plan to the state's top lawmakers.

"My wife is great at picking out suits, but she hasn't been able to get me out of my cowboy boots," Autry says in his characteristic southwestern twang. "It's a reminder to me of where I've come from and where I've been."

Autry, the son of farm laborers, grew up in the dusty fields of rural Central California. After more than two decades in film and television, he turned to politics, winning election as Fresno's mayor in 2000. In July the Republican was picked by mayors of California's largest cities to lead a crusade against state poaching from local government coffers.

It wasn't your typical, polished choice.

Autry is loud. He's stubborn. And just a few months ago, he was the most vocal Republican critic of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. But mayors of California's big cities liked his tenacity, even if it sometimes rubbed people the wrong way.



giddy over the results, their success has created a thorny and somewhat confusing competition between Proposition 1A and the locals' own Proposition 65. If both pass, the one with the highest number of votes kills the other. Proposition 65 proponents plan to clear up the confusion thusly: Their official ballot argument in *favor* of Proposition 65 will urge voters to vote *against* it and *for* Proposition 1A.

Lewis Carroll-like election strategy notwithstanding, local politicians are pleased.

"This is historic stuff," said Autry.

"We're stronger than ever before because [legislators] know we mean what we say and we'll take action. We also have a governor on our team."

The choice of Autry and Los Angeles Mayor James Hahn to represent the cities is one indication of how the locals were mindful of politics this year. As mayor of the state's largest city, Hahn was an obvious choice. Sacramento Mayor Heather Fargo said she suggested Autry as the other lead negotiator for several reasons: He is one of only a few Republican big-city mayors, he comes from the central

part of the state, and he has a close relationship with Schwarzenegger.

"He has access to and is friends with the governor," Fargo said. "He's also on the League board, and most of the other big city mayors are not."

Besides Autry and Hahn, the league was represented by its executive director, Chris McKenzie.

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) sent executive director Steve Szalay, along with Supervisor Valerie Brown of Sonoma County, a former legislator, and Supervisor Paul Stein of Calaveras County.

"He's not afraid to say what he needs to say," says Long Beach Mayor Beverly O'Neill, one of several who nominated Autry to represent cities alongside Los Angeles Mayor James K. Hahn. "Sometimes being outspoken and saying exactly what you mean is a real positive, and he's able to do that."

Autry was born in Louisiana in 1952, but he spent most of his childhood in the tiny farming town of Riverdale in southern Fresno County. His parents followed the crops, picking cotton and fruit in the lush fields. The 6-foot 3-inch-tall Autry won a football scholarship to the University of Pacific in Stockton, and later spent three years as a quarterback for the Green Bay Packers in the mid-1970s. He started five or six games for the Packers, but his arm quickly wore out.

"I had a great career going until they put me in," Autry says with a chuckle.

Inspired by the movie "Rocky" about a struggling boxer trying to make it big time, Autry took up acting. He won roles in an array of films and television shows, including bit parts in "The Dukes of Hazzard," the "A-Team" and "Cheers." His most memorable role was Captain Bubba Skinner on the cop series "In the Heat of the Night."

Autry says he felt the need to give back to society, and decided to run for mayor of Fresno. "I felt that things were out of whack here in terms of education and quality of life between the haves and the have-nots," he says. "I felt my life experience would give me some tools that could be beneficial in tearing those walls down."

After his election in 2000, Autry quickly built a reputation for being strong-willed, clashing several times with local leaders. But Fresnoans stood by their mayor, and he easily won re-election in March with nearly three out of every four votes cast.

Celebration, though, was short-lived for Autry, who was reeling from the passage of Schwarzenegger's \$15 billion debt recovery bond. Autry had feverishly cam-

paigned against the measure, likening the state to a spending addict who desperately needed a money fix.

Autry knew Schwarzenegger from his acting days — the two met about 20 years ago at a Los Angeles gym — and supported his friend's recall candidacy. But Autry became increasingly critical of Schwarzenegger's decisions after the new governor took office. Autry slammed everything from Schwarzenegger's proposed mid-year budget cuts to his rolling back the car tax without immediately reimbursing cities for lost funds. The feud attracted national attention. The two made amends in April, and Autry has since praised Schwarzenegger for his appointments to key education boards and for standing up for local governments.

"This governor broke all the old roles, and thank God he did," Autry says.

Chris McKenzie, executive director of the League of California Cities, says Autry played a key role in the local government budget deal that trades short-term pain for long-term financial stability: "He's been a strong advocate for cities of all sizes."

Others are more critical, saying Autry did little to sway Democratic minds and angered some with his in-your-face approach. Senate President pro Tempore John Burton (D-San Francisco) met face-to-face with Autry during budget talks. "I don't think he's a negotiator. I think he just takes a position and sticks with it," says Burton, adding that Autry's lobbying didn't change the way he felt about city funding.

Political veterans in Sacramento weren't used to Autry, with his seemingly endless supply of cheesy one-liners and the cowboy boots he wore with his suits, but few would argue that he left an impression.

"My personal goal was to not waver on our commitment to ending the arbitrary state raiding of local treasuries," Autry says. "I never lost focus of that." 🏠

Jennifer M. Fitzenberger is a Capitol reporter for The Fresno Bee. Send comments to comments@californiajournal.org

**“We’ve got a very popular politician supporting it for us.
and his signature on the ballot arguments, the chance**

Legislative dissent

But some legislative leaders believe the locals have crafted bad public policy.

Assembly Budget Committee Chairman Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento) opposed Schwarzenegger’s deal with local governments on the grounds that it would make it much harder to reform a broken fiscal system in which cities and counties rely too heavily on sales taxes. Critics have long maintained that this dependence drives cities and counties to approve excessive amounts of retail development while not building enough hous-

ing or focusing on attracting high-paying jobs.

Steinberg and other legislative leaders also thought *they* had a deal with the governor in early July to protect aggregate taxes but leave the state flexibility to shift sales taxes among local governments themselves. The proposal also would have allowed the Legislature to tap local property taxes with a two-thirds vote, rather than providing the constitutional protection sought by local governments.

Word of this deal touched off a flurry of lobbying by local politicians over the Fourth of July weekend. Schwarzenegger called press conferences around the state to announce that he would stand firm with cities and counties. The two-thirds threshold eventually made it into the final deal, but cities and counties got their way on other issues, including the sales tax.

“You’ve got to give the cities credit,” says Steinberg, himself a veteran of local government as a Sacramento city councilman in the 1990s. “They were very strategic and they got the money together to put Proposition 65 on the ballot. That created the leverage to be able to negotiate their agreement. On the other hand, I think the end result is very bad public policy.”

Reforming the taxation system has been one of Steinberg’s pet issues. He gained national attention with AB 680, a bill that would have required local governments in the Sacramento region to share some of their sales taxes. The measure died amid intense opposition by suburban, sales-tax-rich cities such as Roseville, Folsom and Elk Grove. But even those local leaders who generally support Steinberg’s ideas about reform — including the

association of counties — say they could no longer wait for the Legislature to act.

“It was more important for us to stay together and protect local government revenues,” said Fargo, who supported AB 680. “We’ve been losing money to the state for 12 years, and for a good part of that time the state had a budget surplus.”

Local officials still fume over the fact that politicians in Sacramento never undid a 1992 shift of \$3 billion in property tax revenues from local government to schools. McKenzie said that shift has cost cities and counties \$44 billion in revenues.

Given this reality, members of the 106-year-old League of California Cities decided to dramatically change their approach to lobbying the Capitol. That effort began three years ago when the league increased its dues to hire political organizers charged with building a grass-roots network of local politicians who could be available to work on campaigns.

“We’ve developed the ability to hold concurrent news conferences around the state,” McKenzie said. About the same time, the association of counties identified “strength through coalitions” as its top priority, Szalay said.

Historically, California cities and counties often have found their interests at odds. But the two groups joined forces. They brought in the special districts, and formed a coalition called LOCAL, or “Leave our Community Assets Local.”

The coalition was born “out of the very firm belief that if we didn’t pull together and protect each other, we’d be divided by the state,” McKenzie said.

In 2002, the groups crafted a bal-

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**With the governor's endorsement
for success is very high.”**
— Steve Szalay, CSAC executive director

lot initiative but decided not to pursue it. They came back to the idea after being targeted yet again in the budget this year. Local politicians gathered ballot signatures in front of grocery stores. Fargo said she carried her petition around in her purse everywhere, asking people to sign.

The threat of Proposition 65 may have brought Schwarzenegger to the table, but he was already inclined to come, said participants in the negotiations. As a political newcomer, Schwarzenegger may not understand the intricacies of local government finance, but he understands that cities and counties “provide core services that people care about the most,” said Chuck Dalldorf, Fargo’s chief of staff.

While the mayors of the 10 largest cities took the lead in negotiations, they reported back daily to the league board, comprised of representatives from mostly smaller jurisdictions. Participants say there was little dissent in the league, an organization known for fracturing along geographic and demographic lines.

“Everybody hung together; it was extraordinary,” Dalldorf said.

Of the three groups involved in the negotiations, the League of Cities was most aggressive in demanding protections. Cities are more dependent on sales taxes than counties, and the league would not accept any deal that didn’t bar the state from reducing or reallocating the 1 percent sales tax collected by local jurisdictions.

The counties won a significant victory with the inclusion of language that would allow them to suspend programs created by the state if the state doesn’t pay for them. Szalay said this language would apply to a “host of health and human services” that

counties perform on behalf of the state — for which payments are often deferred in hard budget times.

Szalay called Proposition 1A an “excellent” measure. It also stands a much better chance of passing than did Proposition 65, said Ken Emanuels, a lobbyist for Sacramento and other cities.

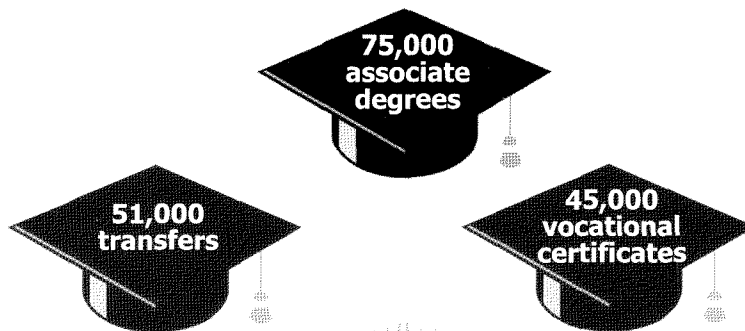
“We’ve got a very popular politician supporting it for us,” he said. “With the governor’s endorsement and his signature on the ballot arguments, the chance for success is very high.”



With one caveat. Local governments must convince the electorate to defeat their own measure (Proposition 65) and pass one put on the ballot by the Legislature (1A). That will undoubtedly be an effort worthy of “Alice in Wonderland.” 🏰

Mary Lynne Vellinga is a reporter for The Sacramento Bee. Send comments to comments@californiajournal.org

**The Community College League
of California salutes the 81,000
faculty, staff and elected
trustees that serve students at
the 109 community colleges
across California.**



California Community Colleges
Keeping the doors open since 1910.

A message from the Community College League of California.

L.A. mayor's race is off and running

After months of speculation, Los Angeles City Council member and former Assm. speaker Antonio Villaraigosa finally made it official. He's running, again, for mayor of Los Angeles. The top tier of contenders has now been set and even before November's presidential election, the race is on full bore.

Villaraigosa's announcement came just days after the recent Democratic National Convention adjourned. His decision didn't surprise California conventioners who'd watched him pop up everywhere. He relentlessly schmoozed delegates, courted Latino leaders and gave hours of interviews. As national co-chair of John Kerry's presidential campaign, Villaraigosa had a speaking role at the event — although not in prime time. His visibility on the national stage could prove helpful.

L.A.'s incumbent mayor, Jim Hahn, who defeated Villaraigosa in a bruising 2001 runoff, was somewhat less peripatetic. Hahn, too, gave a not-in-prime time convention speech. Few in the hall listened to either, but on screen it was no contest. Hahn's low-key delivery was no match for Villaraigosa's animated media persona.

The protracted state budget debate prevented Sen. Richard Alarcon (D-Sylmar) from heading east. However, two other major contenders, former Assm. Speaker Bob Hertzberg (D-Sherman Oaks) and City Councilmember Bernard Parks, L.A.'s former police chief, made the convention rounds, networking and soliciting supporters.

Gubernatorial candidates have done this drill, but such intense campaigning at a national political event, by a swarm of candidates for a local office — even for mayor of the nation's second largest city — is unusual. The stakes are enormous for the current contenders, however, and the costs of campaigning are high. So, with contributions to Los Angeles mayoral candidates limited to \$1,000 per individual, per election, the so-called "money primary" has gone national.

Alarcon's absence from the bazaar reminds us that Sacramento is not the greatest launching pad for a mayoral candidacy. Two modern speakers have previously run for mayor; both lost — Jesse Unruh in 1973 and Villaraigosa in 2001.

Villaraigosa can claim stronger "city creds" than Hertzberg, pointing to his current service on

the city council and his earlier mayoral run. Alarcon leaped in the other direction — from L.A. to Sacramento. He will have to work to re-establish his urban pedigree.

In the critical money hunt, Hertzberg is generating the most buzz. His latest campaign finance report shows he's raised about \$700,000 in the first half of 2004, more than any other candidate during that period. Hahn, who reported raising \$646,000, is in the best financial shape with more than \$1.5 million in his campaign account. Alarcon, reported raising \$204,000 and Parks \$130,000 (including a \$50,000 loan from himself). Villaraigosa has just begun to gear up, but 2001 figures could prove instructive; both he and Hahn collected over \$3 million before the primary.

These early tallies do little to make handicapping the race easy. A lot depends on each candidate's base and the calculus of turnout. In 2001 a coalition of African-American and San Fernando Valley voters boosted Hahn to victory in the runoff. Even before opponents began lining up this year, that coalition began unraveling. African-American voters were angered by Hahn's sacking of then-Chief Parks, who is poised to peel

off a large chunk of Hahn's black support.

San Fernando Valley voters resented Hahn's leadership role in defeating secession. Hertzberg and Alarcon will keep the valley in play. Alarcon was the first Latino elected to the city council from San Fernando. And although Hertzberg opposed secession, he helped push legislation that made its path to the ballot easier.

In 2001 Villaraigosa got 62% of the Latino vote in the primary and 82% in the runoff. It's likely he can do that again; he is better known than Alarcon or Hertzberg, who also has ties to the Latino community.

Hahn's incumbent advantage and his impressive record of six wins in six citywide elections can't be ignored. At this point, a runoff looks likely next year, but we can't predict who'll be in it.

Next year's election is set to provide riveting political drama with a fascinating cast of characters. 

Contributing Editor Sherry Bebitch Jeffe is a senior scholar at the USC School of Public Policy. Send comments to comments@californiajournal.org

by Sherry
Bebitch Jeffe



Transcending the political divide

Like a powerful earthquake, it appears that last year's historic recall of an incumbent governor vented a lot of pressure that was building in the California electorate. Nearly a year later, it's hard to overstate the magnitude of that event and the total rejection of California's political leadership it represented.

Voters chose a celebrity Hollywood action star whose campaign was limited to outsider clichés from a ballot that included a second-term governor, a lieutenant governor and a longtime Republican state senator. The breaking point, it seems, came when California's earlier regular election set two dubious records for the lowest participation and the highest cost ever.

Today, our new governor has remarkably high poll ratings and progress has been made on some of the state's most immediate problems. But the tectonic pressure that led to last year's upheaval did not build overnight and many experts believe major and minor shakers are still to come.

California remains in crisis. Huge gaps in its health care safety net have left more than 4.5 million uninsured, wreaking financial havoc throughout the system. School test scores are still far behind national averages and, in higher education, budget cuts this year forced California universities to turn away 11,000 eligible students, the first-ever violation of the access guaranteed in the state's Master Plan for Education passed in 1960.

The economy is growing, slowly, but the state still has a structural budget deficit and its business climate is discouraging jobs. The energy market is a tenuous patchwork of desperate repairs and infrastructure needs are lagging population growth.

Perhaps most serious, however, is that California is dividing into parts just as it needs to come together for solutions.

There are growing differences between ethnic communities and income groups as well as regional disparities that discourage consensus. The state's media markets are regional, limiting a common forum for state discourse. Finally, there is a dangerous gap between the government and its constituents. In fact, it's arguable whether the Legislature can still be called a representative body since its members are elected from such ideologically concentrated districts.

Consider that the dominant political party has at least a 10-point voter registration advantage in all but 16 of the 173 California districts for the Legislature and the Congress. Only three districts have a margin of less than five percent. That partisan intensity produces lawmakers with little in common.

On the environment, the California League of Conservation Voters gave Democrats in the Legislature an average score of 94 out of 100, while Republicans averaged just 4. On business issues, not a single Republican scored lower than 80 percent with the California Chamber of Commerce while just five of the 64 Democrats in the Legislature last year scored above 40.

California is in need of a wider conversation about its problems and its future. It's also in need of new ideas.

One effort being launched to encourage a brighter future for the state is from the New America Foundation, a non-partisan policy institute whose purpose is to bring promising new voices and new ideas to the fore of America's public discourse. Believing that neither side of the political divide is adequately addressing the challenges

and opportunities of our era, the New America Foundation seeks to reshape public debate by sponsoring individuals and ideas that transcend conventional politics.

The foundation has won high praise in Washington, D.C., where it is headed by President Ted Halstead and Chairman James Fallows. This year, with a grant from The James Irvine Foundation, New America will sponsor talented researchers and writers in California to explore new possibilities for resolving the state's most urgent challenges.

California is still in crisis. But as historian Carey McWilliams said a half century ago, it is also "The Great Exception." As it has before, California will solve its problems and many of its creative solutions will be models for America. 🏛️

David Lesher is California program director for the New America Foundation in Sacramento. He is the former editor of California Journal and a former reporter for the Los Angeles Times. He is recruiting fellows for NAF in California and can be reached at lesher@newamerica.net. Send comments to comments@californiajournal.org

by David
Lesher



California is in
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MARK DRUMMOND

The new “evangelist” of California’s community colleges

Dr. Marshall (Mark) E. Drummond might be the only public official in California who doesn’t mind being compared to a mule. Drummond, chancellor of the California Community College system, grew up on a Bay Area farm and even today raises horses and mules. As a result, he has great appreciation for the equine cousin’s legendary tenacity and work ethic. If recent events are a harbinger of things to come, he will need plenty of both as

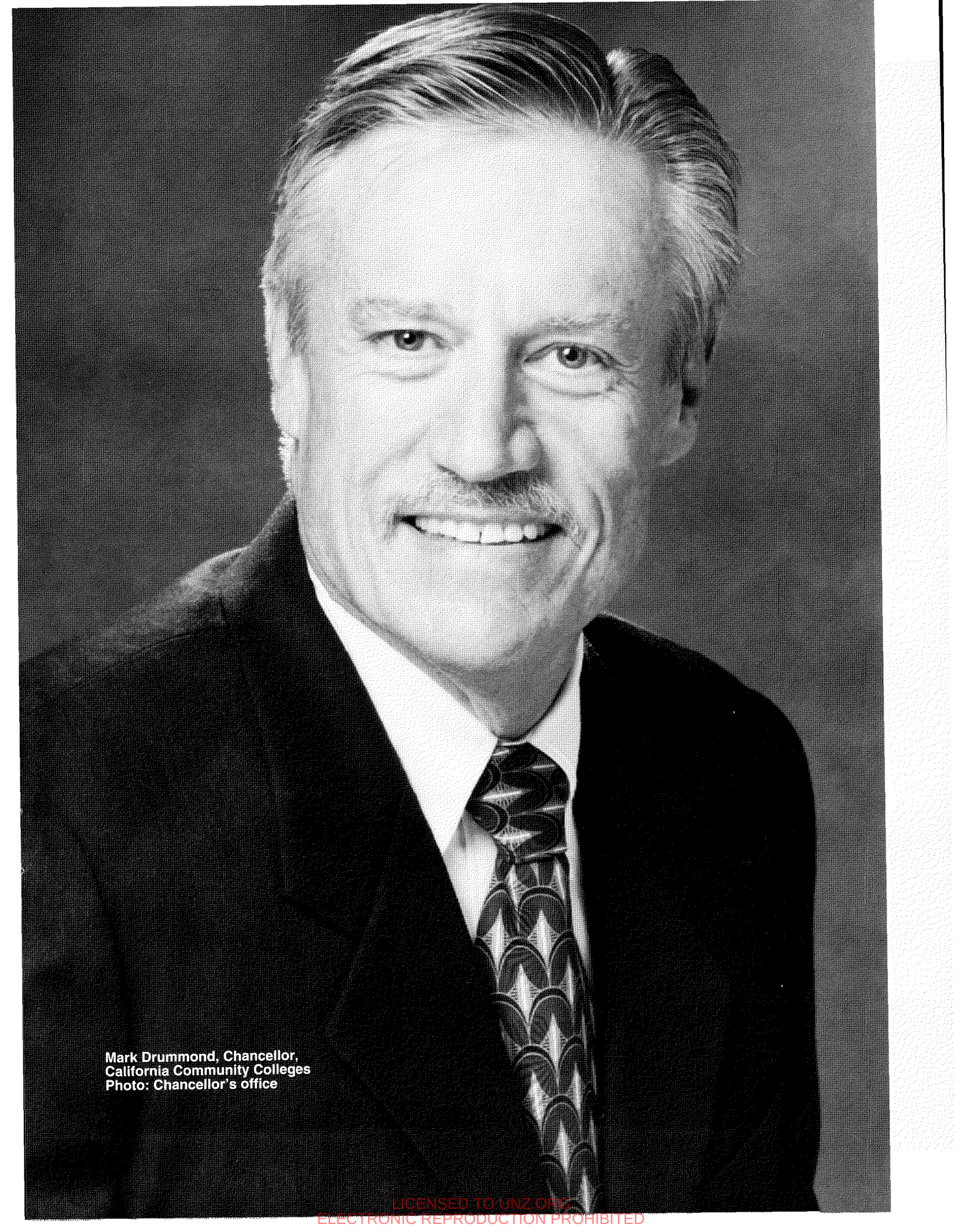
As chancellor, he's a zealous crusader for the state's chronically under-funded and over-crowded system of two-year colleges. Undaunted by the system's "stepchild" status, Drummond hopes to forge a better relationship with legislators and the governor to keep community colleges alive.

By Rich Ehisen

he tries to lead the largest education system in the world through some of its most difficult financial times.

Although generally considered one of the top in the nation, the state’s community college system also is one of the nation’s most poorly funded, ranking 45th nationally in per-student funding. A report from the Public Policy Institute of California released earlier this year noted that despite having more students than the University of California and California State University systems combined — 2.8 million in 2004 — the California Community Colleges system has seen only a fraction of the funding increases those higher-education institutions have been granted since 1971. The system also was recently asked to enroll thousands of additional high school students the CSU and UC systems couldn’t handle, an assignment for which they were neither consulted or offered additional funding to accommodate. Drummond says the perpetual second-class status of the state’s two-year colleges is both draining and surprising.

“It is remarkable that the state has been so short-sighted in not taking a better look what they’re paying for, what they’re getting and what they need,” says Drummond, 62, who took over as head of the 109-campus system in



Mark Drummond, Chancellor,
California Community Colleges
Photo: Chancellor's office

"California should not be funding its community nation. It doesn't make any sense for building

January. "California should not be funding its community colleges at the very bottom of the barrel in the nation. It doesn't make any sense for building the workforce and the citizenry of the future."

Drummond knows his way around the state's education system, having earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at San Jose State University and his doctorate in education from the University of San Francisco. He began teaching at Chabot Community College in Hayward in 1967. He left for the private sector in 1981, running several technology firms in California before eventually returning to serve nearly a decade as president of Eastern Washington University. He took over the 130,000-student Los Angeles Community College District in 1999, where he is credited with turning around a declining enrollment and being the driving force behind a pair of bond measures that

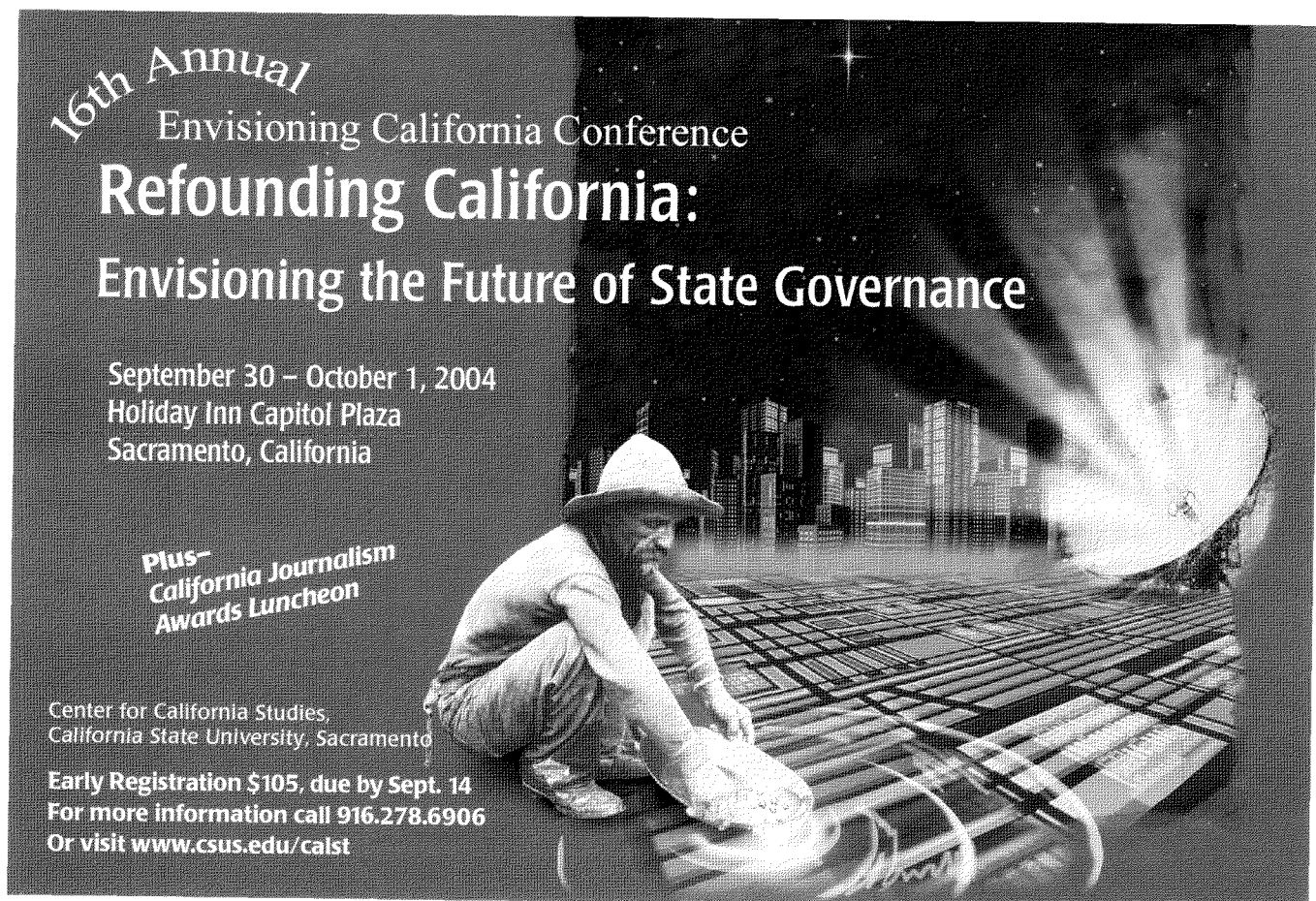
raised more than \$2 billion for improvements to the district's nine campuses.

Through it all Drummond has earned a reputation as an intelligent and driven leader who likes to spend time in the trenches with teachers and staff, who he says often "just need to be able to tell me if something is right or wrong." He also has become well known for his often-blunt vernacular, which has earned him both friends and detractors.

An evangelist

"I consider myself an evangelist for the community colleges," he explains. "But I don't go out and cause confusion and dissension for the sake of doing it. I try to rock the boat because I want to be sure that the causes I believe in dearly get a fair hearing."

"I am actually very excited about Mark being our



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colleges at the very bottom of the barrel in the workforce and the citizenry of the future.”

— Mark Drummond, Chancellor, California Community Colleges

chancellor partly because he is a very bold and candid leader,” says Brice Harris, chancellor of the Los Rios Community College District in Sacramento. “He’s not afraid to take on tough issues, he’s not afraid to be candid with members of the Legislature and the administration, or even to our own trustees and CEOs about what the system needs.”

Kay Clark, president of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, also praises Drummond’s candor, although she says it isn’t for everyone.

“He is very up front about what needs to be done and changes that need to be made, and change terrifies some people,” she says. But Clark also notes that although the system’s struggles have driven morale to an all-time low in recent years, Drummond has “galvanized teachers and faculty and completely energized the system.”

“There was a great deal of fear when we were recruiting him that he wouldn’t take the job,” Clark says. “Given the challenges here and the success he was having in Los Angeles, a lot of us wondered why he would want the job. But thankfully his opinion was, ‘Why wouldn’t I want it?’”

Drummond says he knows the success he has enjoyed in the past will come harder at the state level. He says two things have worked their way to the top of his priority list since January: expanding the relationship between community colleges and corporations who help pay for some of the job training the system provides, and educating the numerous community college students who are not prepared to handle college coursework.

“Growing relationships with industry — job training — is a key for future success of system, but we also have an unbelievable problem with remedial education,” he says. “About half the people who come to us are simply not ready to take college classes. In some of the colleges in our system it is as high as 90 percent.”

Acquiring the money to address those issues remains difficult. Even with a 7 percent boost in funding for next year, community colleges still get nowhere near the money promised by Proposition 98.

“Since Prop. 98, there has been an inherent disparity in how community colleges are funded,” Drummond says. “The K-12 schools have gotten the first swipe of the plate, which means we have had the leftovers. Instead of getting the 11 percent we got the year prior to Prop 98, we have been around 10 percent [10.35 percent under the new budget]. That might seem small to the casual observer, but

when you are talking about a base of \$50 billion, it adds up to us getting short-funded in the neighborhood of \$400-\$500 million every single year.”

Drummond says that even if the system got everything it is supposed to get under Proposition 98, California would still only be 35th in per-student funding. Budget woes forced community colleges to turn away more than 175,000 students last year, and Drummond dreads the consistent lack of resources has hurt the system’s ability to keep up with the community college mission of training the state’s workforce and reaching out to the state’s diverse population.

Keeping up

“Chronic under-funding has made it much more difficult to keep up with modern technology and resulted in us not keeping as close to the cutting edge as we should,” he

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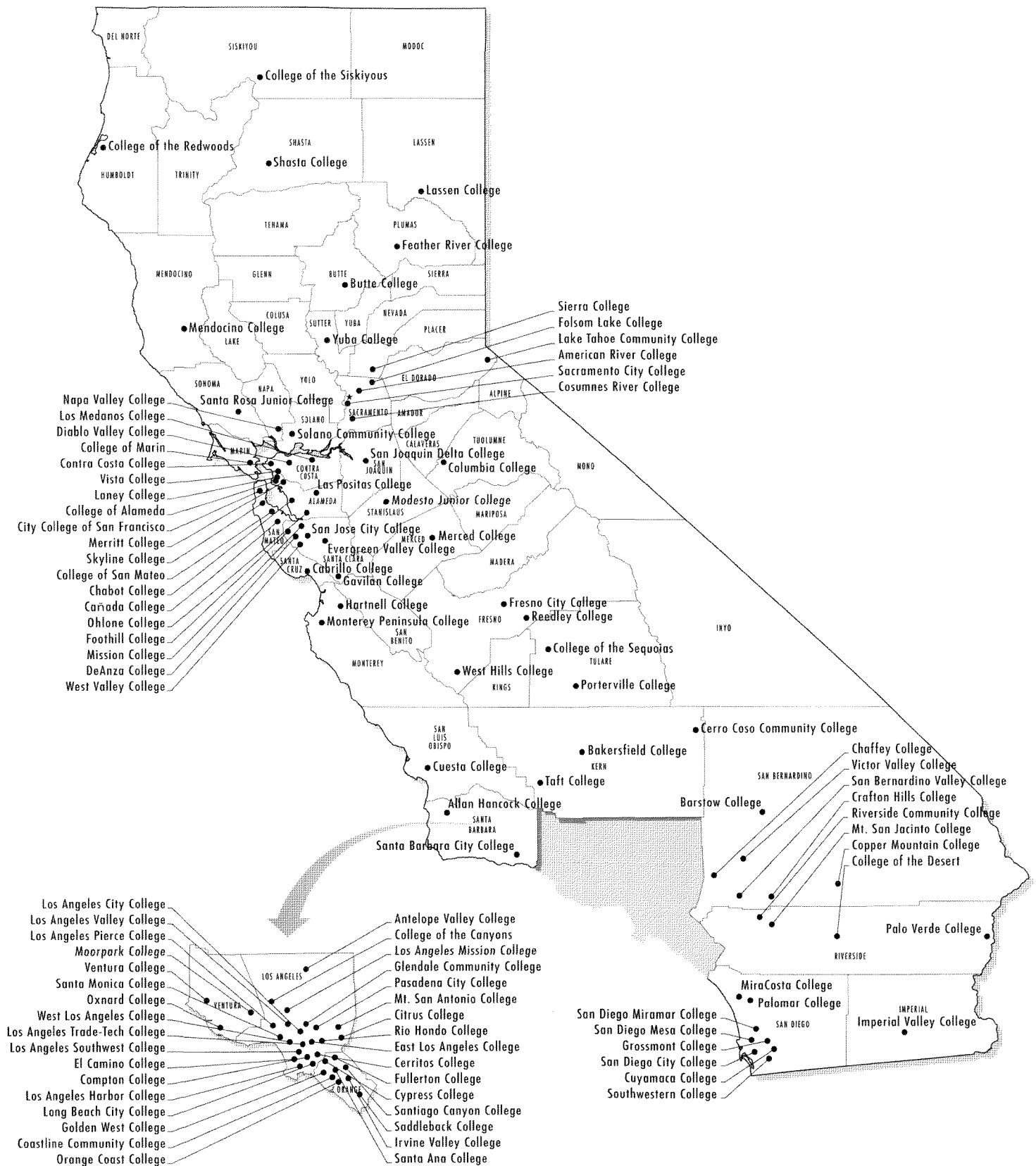
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CALIFORNIA'S 109 COMMUNITY COLLEGES



Source: California Community Colleges
Chancellor's office, www.cccco.edu

"If we're not careful, we're going to end up with a 1958-style community college system, which is what the Legislature and administrations of the past have sought to break us out of"

— Brice Harris, Los Rio Community College District

says. "Frankly, we have not expanded access as far as we should. We enroll about 2 million students a year, but we probably should be enrolling 2.5 or 3 million."

Funding might become one of the least of his concerns. The recently released California Performance Review (CPR), commissioned by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, suggests placing several education agencies, including Drummond's office, under the administration of the Office of the Secretary of Education. The idea makes Drummond — and many of his supporters — bristle.

"If you look at the CPR, some retro people wrote that thing and want to throw us backward into the K-12," he says. "That's crazy. We should be looking more like the CSU and UC systems, not less."

Harris echoes Drummond's stance.

"If we're not careful, we're going to end up with a 1958-style community college system, which is what the Legislature and administrations of the past have sought to break us out of," Harris says.

Clark says the CPR just illustrates another of the great challenges Drummond faces: getting lawmakers and the governor to understand just what the role of the chancellor should be.

"The community college system is far too sophisticated to be placed under an appointed official," she says.

Whether the consolidation happens could come down to how well Drummond makes his argument with Schwarzenegger. Drummond says he has a good relationship with most lawmakers, but, "Frankly, we've done less well with the governor." That doesn't bode well according to those who remember the results of former Governor Gray Davis' dislike for Drummond's predecessor, Thomas J. Nussbaum.

"My predecessor fell into disfavor with Davis and this agency took unprecedented cuts, almost 50 percent. No other state agencies were reduced more than 25 percent," Drummond says. He quickly adds, however, that Schwarzenegger is a much different person than Davis.

"Gray Davis was not a friend to the community colleges. He was an elitist who clearly favored the UC system," Drummond says. "I think Governor Schwarzenegger values us, but the problem is that he inherited a hellacious mess, and we're simply not his biggest problem within that mess."

Ironically, the whole CPR situation comes along just as Drummond is in the midst of his own internal performance

review, which he, his staff and others have been working on for months. He says that regardless of what might happen with the CPR, his plan is to push forward with his own plans to streamline the office.

"I hope it's [the CPR] not a big fight," Drummond says. "I hope we emphasize the positive, and I hope everybody understands we need higher education. If it goes the other way and it gets ugly and nasty, with the Legislature against the governor with me in the middle screaming and yelling, that's just the way it has to be. But when it's all over, we have to put the system back together and support the system. That's the important thing." 🏛️

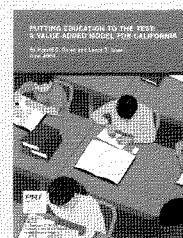
Rich Ehsen is editor of Capitol Journal, a weekly news publication on state government. Send comments to comments@californiajournal.org

"NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND" — HOW DO WE MAKE IT WORK?

The federal No Child Left Behind Act has spurred states to test students on basic subject knowledge. Now the goal must be to use this test data to boost the achievement of each and every student.

As educators, parents, and lawmakers know, this is a tall order. But a new study by the Pacific Research Institute (PRI) shows that such goals can be achieved.

Putting Education to the Test, by Harold C. Doran and Lance T. Izumi, provides a value-added model for tracking and improving annual student achievement growth. The authors apply the model to California and also explain how it could be used in any state.



Read more about this practical strategy for reform at <http://www.pacificresearch.org/press/edu/ValueAddedAdvert.htm>. For a print copy, contact Susan Martin at PRI, 415-955-6120 or smartin@pacificresearch.org.

Leadership:

Big on books

California's new chief librarian, **Susan Hildreth**, wants public libraries as cozy as a living room but as streamlined as technology allows. Former head of the San Francisco Public Library, where she managed 650 staffers and a \$59 million budget, Hildreth arrives with 30 years of library experience in Benicia, Davis, Sacramento and Placer County, as well as a stint as State Library consultant in 1996-98. As State Librarian, Hildreth oversees the library's role as the research/reference arm of the Legislature, the state's historical document trove, as well as the financial steward of the state's public libraries. She envisions California's public libraries more convenient and Internet-friendly, with self-checkout of books and card catalogues accessible from home computers, while drawing in more users with speakers, reading groups — even coffee carts, comfy chairs and "refreshments." Hildreth, who assumed the \$123,700 post last month, replaces longtime state librarian Kevin Starr, who retired in April.



State Librarian Susan Hildreth

Administration

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed **Patti Garamendi**, former deputy secretary of commerce/trade/legislation in the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency and the wife of state Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi, as agricultural specialist (\$80,000) to the California Exposition and State Fair. **Erica Manuel**, former account executive with Edelman Public Relations, was named Cal Expo's public relations manager. The governor also named four appointees to the Cal Expo State Fair Board of Directors: **Marko Mlikotin**, president of River City Communications in Sacramento; **Kathleen Nakase**, Orange County Farm Bureau executive director; **Amparo Perez-Cook**, co-founder of Aztec Media, Inc. and general manager of "Ke Buena," a Spanish-language radio station in Sacramento; and **Brenda Southwick**, managing counsel of the California Farm Bureau Federation's natural resources and environment division. The board



Patti Garamendi



Amparo Perez-Cook

positions are unpaid. ... **Susie Wong**, former Cal Trans administration and business enterprise appeals manager, is the new communications director, Dept. of Corporations (\$79,000). ... **Sherry Mehl**, former executive officer, Board of Behavioral Sciences, was named chief deputy director, Dept. of Consumer Affairs. ... **John Davies**, a San Diego attorney who was judicial appointments secretary under former Gov. Pete Wilson, has been appointed judicial appointments advisor (\$60,000) to Gov. Schwarzenegger. ... **Erroll Soothers**, Los Angeles County Museum of Art assistant vice president, was named deputy director for critical infrastructure, CA Office of Homeland Security (\$97,700). ... The former warden of Pelican Bay State Prison, **Joseph McGrath**, was named assistant director of litigation management, Dept. of Corrections. ... **Debra L. Givens**, Yuba County public defender for eight years, was named a Yuba County Superior Court justice (\$139,800). Givens was elected to the bench in March for a six-year term starting in January 2005; the governor's

appointment allows her to begin serving immediately.

Constitutional Offices

State Treasurer Phil Angelides announced two appointments: **Kirsten Snow Spalding**, former chief of staff, California Labor Federation, was named chief deputy treasurer, and **Carrie Cornwell**, former chief of staff to state Sen. Tom Torlakson (D-Antioch), was named deputy treasurer. ... Former *Sacramento Bee* Capitol reporter **Steve Green**, who was asst. secretary to the Youth and Adult Correctional Agency during the Gray Davis administration, is back in the Capitol as press secretary to Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante.

Legislature

Assm. Patty Berg (D-Eureka) has hired as her legislative director **Cameron Valderrama**, who previously worked for Assm. George Nakano (D-Torance). Berg also hired **Allison Ruff**, former analyst for the local Area Agency on Aging, as a consultant to the Assembly's Aging and Long-Term Care Committee. ... **Assm. Leland Yee** (D-San Francisco) was elected president of the new National Asian Pacific American Caucus, under the wing of the National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL). The national, bipartisan caucus promotes involvement of Asian and Pacific Islanders in state and local government. ... **Greg Pagan** has been promoted to chief counsel, Assembly Public Safety Committee, replacing **Bruce Chan**, who's become a San Francisco Superior Court commissioner.



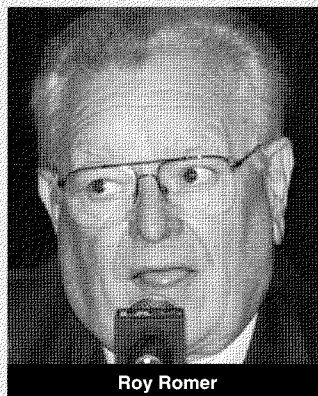
Grantland Johnson

Other

Grantland Johnson, former Health and Human Services Secretary under Gov. Gray Davis, has become community and economic development director for the Sacramento Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO. ... **Amy Brown**, governmental advocate for the League of California Cities, has joined the governmental relations team at Kahn, Soares & Conway, which

Appointment: Romer's up for second round

Roy Romer, former three-time Colorado governor, was appointed to a second term as superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District, the country's second-largest public school district. He will serve through June 2007. Long active on the national political scene, the governor-turned-schools-chief chaired the Democratic National Committee from 1997-2000. As L.A. schools superintendent, Romer has focused on beefing up classroom instruction to improve student learning and accelerating classroom construction to relieve overcrowded schools. The 750,000-student district expects to open 160 new schools by 2012 — 14 new schools in 2004-05 alone — funded in part by more than \$7 billion in local bond money.



Roy Romer

changes

became the league's new lobbying firm. ... Investigative reporter **Kimberly Kindy** is the new Capitol bureau chief of the *Orange County Register*. ... **Floyd Shimomura**, a senior assistant attorney general in the Attorney General's government section, has been appointed executive officer of the State Personnel Board. ... SBC California promoted attorney **Mark Weideman** to vice president of legislative affairs, where he'll oversee SBC's ballot campaign against Prop. 67, the emergency care surcharge on phone bills. 🏛️

These pages are prepared with substantial help from "The Capitol Morning Report," a comprehensive daily e-mail and fax listing of events, appointments, staff changes, lobbyist registrations and fund raisers in and around Sacramento. For more information, call (916) 443-5883.



Who's filling what jobs in your office? Drop us a line at people@californiajournal.org

HEALTH CARE

The California Department of Corrections spends \$990 million a year to provide medical care for 162,000 inmates. But the system is so inefficient and incompetent that some consider it “cruel and unusual” punishment.

By John Howard

Behind bars, the horror stories multiply.

There was the Corcoran Prison inmate with neurological damage, in severe pain and unable to walk, who crawled — three times — into a prison medical office seeking help. He had lost 40 pounds and his anti-pain medication had been cut off.

There was the Calipatria Prison inmate with a leaking heart valve who unsuccessfully sought treatment and was transferred to Folsom prison before his diagnosis was complete. Six months later, he was still awaiting treatment — despite the family’s offer to pay for the operation. The family believes he was shunted from prison to prison to postpone expensive treatment. That prisoner, a 33-year-old Los Angeles man serving a sentence for rape, has survived — so far.

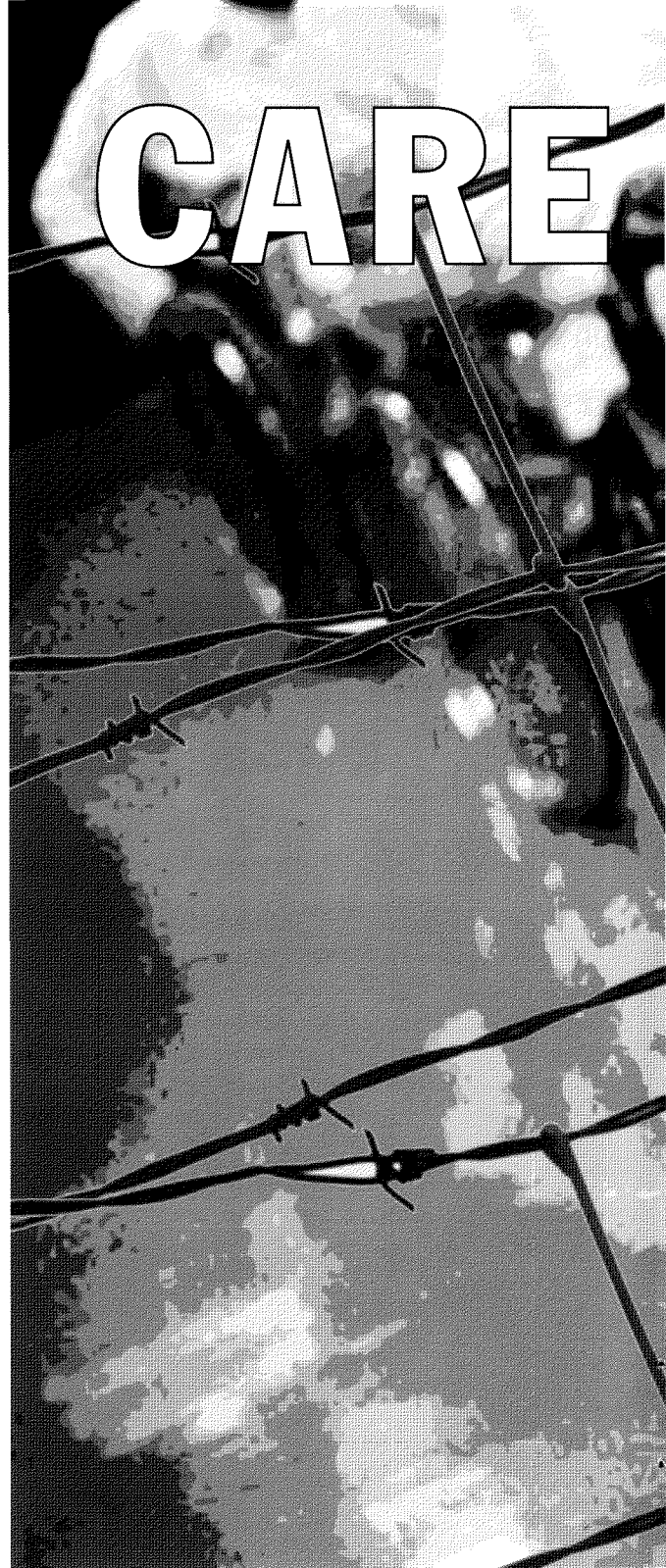
Another inmate wasn’t so lucky. Suffering an emergency following an operation, the Vacaville prisoner was transferred to a clinic 60 miles away but died en route.

In another case, a woman prisoner at Chowchilla suffered from a tumor growing on her skull. The tumor — not cancerous — grew steadily. Treatment was delayed.

“It was expanding week to week and the yard was freaking out,” noted Dr. Corey Weinstein, a San Francisco general practitioner, expert on prison health care and frequent critic of state correctional medicine. Weinstein, who has dealt with inmates for more than three decades, was asked to review the case and called a specialist who had examined the woman.

“It was the first time he had ever received a call from a prison doctor in the eight or nine years he worked for the prison. No doctor had ever called him and asked, ‘What does this mean? Please help me interpret.’ But that’s what doctors do, that’s what they are supposed to do. This rarely happens in the Department of Corrections.”

For John Dip, a La Verne construction contract manager and father of the inmate with the leaking heart valve, dealing with the Department of Corrections has been agony. His son, who was stabbed in the heart as a youngster, “had a pre-



BEHIND BARS



existing condition,” Dip said. “From what my son said, they moved him to another prison just to minimize his medical expenses. He gets transferred, then he has to wait another 30 days to get processed again. This is a game they play. It’s a stalling technique.” The corrections department denied it has a transfer-to-avoid-paying policy.

The beleaguered Department of Corrections, with its 162,000 inmates and 33 prisons, does not need another scandal. But it has one.

Already under fire this year over allegations of prisoner abuse, investigative cover-ups, a supine relationship with the powerful prison guards’ union and uneven discipline of its own officers, the \$5.7 billion prison system has been thrust — again — into the unwavering glare of public attention, this time for its medical care. Two powerful forces — the federal courts and the state Legislature — are taking aim at the quality and cost of correctional health care.

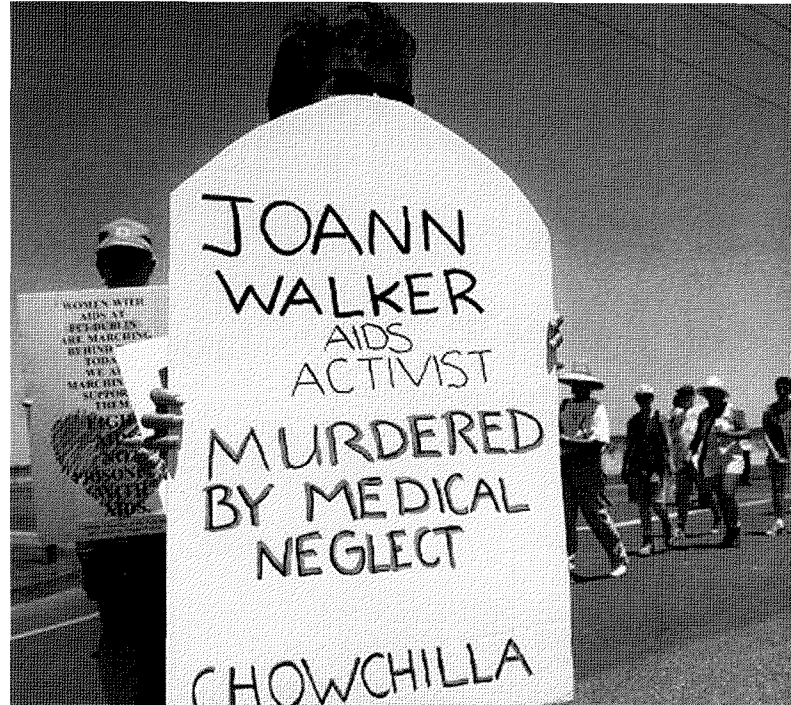
It’s easy to see why.

Incompetence and inefficiency

The prisons' huge \$990 million-a-year health care system, which swallows a sixth of the prisons' entire budget, is plagued by incompetence and inefficiency. A harsh assessment, but one shared by some inside — and many more outside — the corrections department.

Seventeen percent of prison inmates have serious mental disorders. A third of the inmates have Hepatitis -C — a level 15 times greater than the general population. About 1.5 percent are HIV patients, about five times the level of the non-inmate population.

Complicating the medical dilemma is the need for security and safety. Veteran correctional officers know too well that inmates may feign illness, using a medical excuse for more sinister purposes. To the guards who face a daily life-threatening workplace, it's a question of what's more important: custody or care? At least some of the prison's



In the end, the prisons' medical misery is two-pronged: The care is bad and it costs too much.

250 doctors also are skeptical. "You've got to understand, you are dealing with people here who are bald-faced liars and convicted felons," one doctor told federal monitors.

Dan Macallair of the Center of Criminal and Juvenile Justice said the attitude of doctors toward inmate patients is a major stumbling block to providing adequate medical care.

"If inmates are in state custody, it is the responsibility of the state to house and feed them and provide adequate medical care. You can't subject them [inmates] to life-threatening situations because you consider them less deserving or because it is too costly," he said.

In the end, the prisons' medical misery is two-pronged: The care is bad and it costs too much. Just how bad and how costly are questions targeted in a scathing report written by an investigative panel commissioned by U.S. District Judge Thelton Henderson and in an equally critical audit commissioned by the Legislature.

Together, the two studies delivered a body blow to correctional medicine, fueling legislative investigations and potentially new intervention from a federal judge who has already threatened to put the entire state prison system under federal control — as occurred for years in Texas. "Quite simply," said Senator Jackie Speier (D-Hillsborough), who has headed numerous investigations into the prison system, "it is a mess."

Quality concerns aside, the costs alone are staggering. From 1998 through 2003, the inmate population remained roughly constant, about 160,000 inmates, but hospital costs nearly doubled, from \$59.4 million to \$112.6 million,

driven by higher costs per visit, aging patients and an increased number of admittances. Those increases drive up general health care costs, according to a state audit. The number of prisoner hospital admittances that cost above \$50,000 each soared 254 percent, while those below \$50,000 went up two-thirds. Routine scheduled appointments for inmates went up 148 percent, and the Department of Corrections "paid amounts three to eight times more than they would if they had used Medicare," a Senate analysis noted.

The highest hospital costs were paid to a network of seven private hospitals that have secure, barred facilities specially constructed for inmates. According to the Association of California Hospital Districts — which represents small, mostly rural, public hospitals — the average cost per inmate patient runs about \$9,069 at private facilities compared with \$6,066 for public hospitals.

The department notes that the higher costs at private hospitals are driven in part by the need to cover the necessary expense of providing the secure settings required to treat patients who are inmates.

One hospital, the Queen of the Valley in Napa, received net income from the state averaging \$28,068 per CDC patient, about double what it receives for a non-prisoner patient through private insurance and Medicare. The ACHD hopes to set up joint powers agreements among its members, allowing them to compete more effectively for the CDC's business. That legislation, SB260 by Senator Gloria Romero (D-Los Angeles), was sent to the governor.

Peter Gambee, a lobbyist for the ACHD, said a joint



Protests at Chowchilla women's prison over lack of adequate inmate health care. Photo: www.prisons.org

powers agreement would save the state at least \$20 million annually "while improving access to and quality of inmate health care."

Cruel and unusual punishment

Judge Henderson oversees compliance under a sweeping legal agreement known as the "Plata" settlement, after Marciano Plata, one of nine plaintiffs in an April 2001 class-action lawsuit filed by inmates' rights activists. The settlement, enforced by federal monitors, requires California's prisons to provide adequate health care by 2008. The lawsuit charged that the prisons' poor medical care violated the constitution's ban on cruel and unusual punishment. After two years of negotiations, prison officials agreed to the settlement, which did not entail monetary damages.

In July, a panel of doctors ordered by Henderson to keep tabs on the system wrote a report that excoriated the prisons' medical care. At one prison, half of eight staff doctors had prior criminal charges, mental health problems or had lost the right to practice medicine at a hospital. At another, a retired cardiothoracic surgeon "manages complex internal medicine patients and makes serious life-threatening decisions on a continual basis," according to the report.

At several institutions, patients are harmed, medical records are flawed or missing, doctors are poorly supervised and lack adequate training, quality control is scant or nonexistent and medical reports are written by those who have had no direct contact with patients. Job screening is poor, and the CDC has failed to weed out substandard physicians.

"Thus, an incompetent anesthesiologist or a retired neurosurgeon can be hired to see patients for diabetes or coronary heart disease, conditions that they have never

been trained to treat. This situation exists at all of the facilities we've reviewed to date..."

The average age of inmates is rising — it is now about 35 — and older inmates require more care (see page 44). Moreover, the close confines of prison life mean inmates are susceptible to epidemics, such as Hepatitis-C. Too, inmates tend to have had less preventive medical care than the general population before they enter an institution, which means they require costlier care when they are inside.

"The lack of preventive care ... it's saving one dollar and then spending \$20 down the line. It's indisputably horrific," said Rose Braz of Critical Resistance, a national prison-reform group.

The bottom line: "There appears to be an emerging pattern of inadequate and seriously deficient physician quality in CDC facilities," the medical experts told Henderson.

Indeed, the problems appear so pervasive that it is difficult to know where to begin to solve them. Even some of the fiercest critics of the state prison system, long accustomed to the familiar litany of allegations about inmate abuse and a lack of fiscal control, were shocked by the magnitude of the findings in the latest report.

"It's like when you go to a room and switch the light on, and the cockroaches scatter," said Senator Romero, who heads a Senate committee probing the Department of Corrections. "Then you go from room to room, turn on the light each time, and there are more cockroaches."

State correctional officials, acknowledging that problems exist, are struggling to deal with them. A new administration, including a new medical chief for the prison



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system, is slowly making changes. But the obstacles are daunting.

"My goal is to improve the value of care for our patients and for the public, and that means improving the quality of the care and better managing our resources," said Dr. Renee Kanan, the new head of the prisons' health division. Among the changes: tougher screening of doctors' qualifications, revised testing, more effective peer review and tougher performance evaluations.

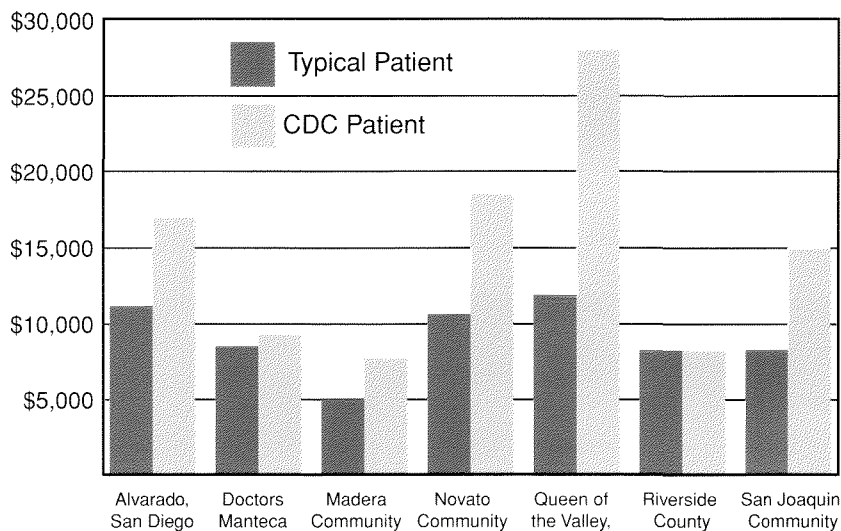
For their part, the federal monitors lauded Kanan.

"Dr. Kanan has been the first medical director to attempt to bring increased control over the [doctor] credentialing process, but she has had a difficult time with personnel, board rulings, the labor union and a legacy of bad physician hiring practices and institutional inertia," federal experts said. In one case, the department attempted to fire a physician with a troubled background — one of the doctors cited with mental health, criminal or credentialing problems — "but he was reinstated by the State Personnel Board," the experts told Henderson.

The California Medical Board, which investigates complaints against physicians, estimates that it receives about four times as many complaints

Hospital Costs for Prisoners vs. Typical Patients

Medical care is expensive at hospitals that treat prison inmates. The costs of security — bars, guards and screening — drive up the bill. Treating an inmate can cost double or more than a non-prisoner patient. The state's prison system contracts with the seven hospitals below to provide inmate treatment.



Source: Association of California Hospital Districts

(roughly 200 annually) from the prison inmate population as it does from the same number of patients among the general public. But the formal complaints to the board may be only the tip of the iceberg. That's because most inmate patients who complain file so-called "602s" — complaint reports that are handled internally by the CDC and not reported to the state medical board. By one estimate, hundreds of 602s are filed annually. One woman said that her inmate husband told her prison officials "were buried in 602 complaints."

California's prison complex is the nation's largest, dwarfing the federal system. California operates the world's largest prison — the 7,000-inmate institution at Avenal — and two of the largest women's prisons in the world.

Prison medical facilities typically handle only routine care, such as dispensing medications and treating minor injuries. Inmates with life-threatening emergencies and less urgent medical needs are taken to outside clinics and hospitals that work under contract with the state.

In the end, the prisons' medical woes can't be resolved overnight.

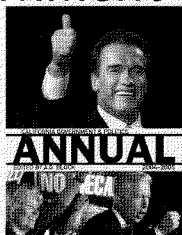
"This is something that has been developing over years. It is not going to get fixed in a few months. It will take time," said J.P. Tremblay, a spokesman for the state Youth and Adult Correctional Agency. "You don't stop the Titanic on a dime. It's like trying to stop a big rig on a downslope on an icy day: If you step on the brakes too fast, it's going to jackknife before you can bring it to a safe stop."

John Howard is senior editor of California Journal. Send comments to comments@californiajournal.org

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Native-American tribes

No single group has had a more dramatic change in political fortunes over the last decade than California Indian tribes. Thanks to tribal casinos (a \$4 billion per year business) and millions in annual political donations, a handful of gaming tribes have gone from complete political obscurity to become California's largest political donors.

Nevertheless, last year's recall election hinted at the first signs of a possible backlash to the meteoric growth in tribal gaming and political power. Though gaming tribes have proven savvy political participants, giving money to politicians from both parties, many of the state's wealthiest tribes placed their bets on Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante's bid for governor. About \$9 million — 20 percent of all money spent in the recall — came from Indian tribes, most of it going to Bustamante.

Arnold Schwarzenegger responded in kind, using tribes as a foil in the recall campaign. Schwarzenegger attacked tribes who continued to flood the political process with money, but who would not renegotiate compact agreements on appropriations to state coffers, or mitigation to local governments for the environmental impacts of casino developments.

But as a sign of the tribes' political power, Schwarzenegger immediately sought to make peace with tribal leaders. Among his first moves as governor was appointing former appeals court judge Daniel Kolkey to negotiate new deals with tribal governments. In June, the governor announced deals with five tribes that allow for unlimited slot machines on tribal lands while providing more money for state coffers and input from local governments on casino expansion. The deal also signifies the expansion of gaming into California's major metropolitan areas.

The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, with help from Sen. Jim Battin (R-La Quinta), has resisted the new compacts, hoping instead to pass a November ballot measure, Prop. 70, that would tax gaming revenues the same as corporations.

Tribes first began to flex their political muscle in 1998, in reaction to a compact signed by Gov. Pete Wilson and San Diego's Pala Band of Mission Indians. That deal placed limits on the types of machines that could be used on tribal lands, but was rejected by many tribal leaders as an infringement

on their sovereignty. The reaction to the Pala compact was 1998's Prop. 5, the \$90 million statewide ballot measure that solidified the mobilization of California's tribes and pushed them into the arena of electoral politics.

Prop. 5 passed overwhelmingly with 63 percent of the vote. It lifted limits on the number of casinos allowed in California and allowed tribes to use Las Vegas-style slot machines on tribal lands. Though Prop. 5 was later thrown out by the California Supreme Court, it symbolized the political arrival of California's Indian tribes, and firmly placed them on the list of movers and shakers.

Prop. 5 symbolized the political arrival of California's Indian tribes and firmly placed them on the list of movers and shakers.

The Prop. 5 campaign introduced Californians to Mark Macarro, the telegenic leader of the Pechanga Band of Mission Indians, one of the state's largest gaming tribes. Macarro continues to be among the most visible tribal spokesmen and one of the most powerful behind-the-scenes tribal leaders.

Gov. Gray Davis negotiated deals with more than 50 tribes, essentially codifying much of what was in Prop. 5. The Davis compacts provided some concessions to labor unions and set aside some money for local governments and non-gaming tribes. In 2000, tribes once again went to the polls to ratify the compacts, passing Prop. 1A with nearly two-thirds of the vote.

November 2004 will prove to be another touchstone for California's tribal governments. Democrat Mary Ann Andreas in AD 80 could become the first tribal member elected to the state Legislature. Andreas, a member of the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, is running against incumbent Assm. Bonnie Garcia (R-Cathedral City).

With two new ballot measures before voters — Prop. 68, which would allow racetracks and card clubs to have slot machines, and Prop. 70, which would remove limits on tribal slots — this year's election will be another test of the voters' feelings toward tribal gaming. As the state wrestled with its massive deficits, tribal gaming continued to grow, and many gaming tribes gave little or no money to the state. Schwarzenegger was easily able to exploit the appearance of tribal greed and used it to ride it to electoral victory. 🏛️

Anthony York is editor of Political Pulse, a biweekly newsletter. Send comments to comments@californiajournal.org

by Anthony York



GROWING OLD THE GULAG

California's inmate population is aging, and that demographic presents the state with an expensive dilemma. Does California continue to incarcerate its older felons, especially those who are terminally ill and pose no likely threat to society? By Jonathan Jones

Clyde Elmer Hoffman sits in a wheelchair, taking in the sun on the patio. Some times he jerks and twitches when he speaks. He looks as if he couldn't hurt a fly.

Hoffman is a felon, convicted of second-degree murder, and the patio is caged to keep him from escaping. Fourteen years ago, he shot dead his girlfriend, Faye Miller, at their trailer home in Merced, and was sentenced to 20 years in prison. But, even if he escaped, would an 80-year-old in a hospital gown and shoes with Velcro laces really get very far?

Hoffman is a prisoner with his own private hospital room at the hospice in California Medical Facility in Vacaville. He has doctors and nurses to remind him to take his medication, grab bars on the side of his bed, and a recliner chair for visitors. Along with the nine other inmates, he has use of a dayroom with a television and a small library with donated books.

Because a doctor diagnosed the spots on his lung as cancerous and says he has less than six months to live, Hoffman is allowed to stay at the hospice where he has more freedom than most of the 162,000 inmates incarcerated in California's prisons.

But the diagnosis was more than eight months ago: "Maybe the spots [on my lungs] are benign," he says.

But Hoffman knows that's not the case. Unless he is granted a miracle, he's going to die in prison.



The 80-year-old grandfather has requested a compassionate release — a procedure allowing early release for those who have less than six months to live, but he's been denied every time. In May, he received another one-year probation denial from the Board of Prison Terms.

To get a compassionate release, an inmate diagnosed with less than six months to live must petition the board. If the board decides a petitioner should be granted a

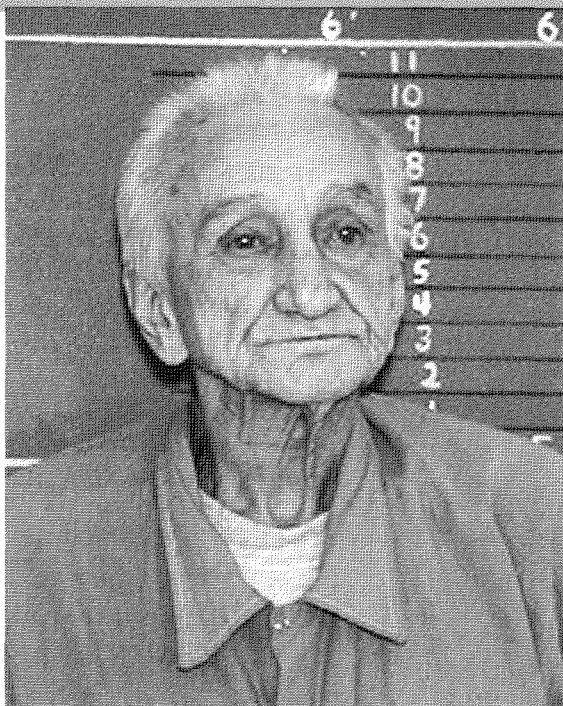
IN



compassionate release, it can recommend that a judge grant a recall of a convict's commitment. Inmates convicted of serious felonies, such as murder, attempted murder or rapes, are rarely released. Of the 724 requests for compassionate releases since 1991, the state granted 251. Last year, the state granted 10 out of 48 such requests. Others died or were paroled before their request was heard, or simply were denied release.

Hoffman is one of approximately 3,000 inmates older than 60 in the state's 32 prisons — a geriatric inmate population that has increased by more than 300 percent over the past 15 years. Although they account for less than 2 percent of the prison population, these aging inmates continue to be a growing—and costly—part of California's prison system. By 2025, the state expects more than 7,000 individuals older than 60 will be in California's prisons,

"These people are dying in the hospice. These people should be allowed to



Hospice inmate Clyde Elmer Hoffman

with more and more inmates confined to wheelchairs and walkers.

Skyrocketing costs

Although prison construction boomed in California during the 1990s to cope with a rapidly growing inmate population, the state failed to create an adequate health-care infrastructure within the prison system, according to state auditor's report. California runs one of the largest prison systems in the world and one of the most expensive, costing taxpayers some \$5.7 billion a year. As a result, the state contracts with local hospitals for many of its medical services.

In the past five years, the cost of contracts for outside medical care more than doubled, with three-fourths of those contracts awarded without soliciting the lowest bids, according to the audit. The cost of inmate health care has increased by \$477.5 million

since 1998. In the current 2003-04 fiscal year, the California Department of Corrections spent an estimated \$990.4 million on health care for prisoners — more than most states spend on their entire prison systems.

A quick analysis of current statistics shows that the prison population is only getting older — and more expensive to maintain. Currently, 22,091 inmates are serving life sentences, 3,043 of them without the possibility of parole. Another 7,331 inmates are serving sentences under the "three strikes" law.

CDC estimates the average cost of an inmate is \$30,929 a year. But the cost of incarcerating and providing care for an

older offender can be three times that, especially for those with terminal illnesses, according to the Project for Older Prisoners — a Washington, D.C.,-based organization that advocates legislative reform measures and parole for qualified older prisoners. The state also is bound by a 1976 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that "deliberate indifference" to serious medical needs violates a prisoner's Eighth Amendment protection against cruel and unusual punishment.

Still, little has been done to implement a comprehensive, system-wide plan for dealing with aging inmates despite calls for clustering older inmates, releasing the feeblest, or creating a unit designed specifically for aging inmates.

"Our median age [of 36] is still relatively young, so there isn't an urgency to address this issue," says CDC spokesperson Terry Thornton. "Basi-

cally our approach to health and medical care is to judge each inmate on a case-by-case basis."

Dr. Corey Weinstein, a volunteer physician and prisoner advocate with California Prison Focus in San Francisco, says inmates are often 10 years older than their actual age.

"You have to add 10 years to an inmate incarcerated for any significant amount of time. Often times, they're also poor or drug-addicted," says Weinstein. "So a person who is 55 or 60 is really 65 or 70 inside."

He believes the state's approach to dealing with health and medical care on a case-by-case basis is a recipe for disaster. "There are a lot of very sick people inside, people with chronic illnesses and hepatitis-C. Many may experience [organ] failure or get cancer. Yet there is no system-wide policy for dealing with this — it is going to be extremely costly," Weinstein says.

Back to the future?

California did not always treat inmates the same regardless of age.

In 1954, California became the first state in the nation to operate a facility strictly for elderly inmates, after converting an old Army hospital in San Luis Obispo into the California Men's Colony. But the elderly unit closed in 1971 during a dip in the prison population. The California Institute for Men in Chino near the San Gabriel Valley Mountains also operated a unit for aged criminals up until the 1990s, but now mixes them with younger inmates and those with special medical needs.

Today, aging felons are sprinkled throughout the state's prison population.

"These people are dying in the

There's no reason for them to be here. go home, to die with their family."

— prison hospice volunteer Frank Parker

hospice," says 70-year-old hospice volunteer Frank Parker. "There's no reason for them to be here. These people should be allowed to go home, to die with their family."

Although the state prison system is besieged with accusations of inadequate health care services for inmates, the Vacaville hospice is one of the bright spots. The wing is air-conditioned, quiet and clean. Several inmates sit in wheelchairs. Others sleep, semi-conscious, with family members by their beds. The floors are linoleum. Pictures of beaches and the California coast are on the wall and can easily convince family visitors they aren't inside a level III medium-security prison. But to visit, one must be cleared at least 72 hours in advance, go through a metal detector and flash a driver's license for a guard to open electronically controlled steel doors.

According to Reverend Keith Knauf, the prison hospice model makes sense economically. "It is a lot cheaper to have these prisoners die here in the hospice than it does to have them go to an outside hospital," says Knauf, director of Pastoral Care Services at the Vacaville prison hospice. "In an outside hospital, you have to have two full-time officers there."

Hoffman no longer suffers from delusions of flying in helicopters and attending weddings. These days, he likes to write poems and pray. He sleeps regular hours and eats grilled cheese sandwiches, soup and vegetables for lunch — soft foods that are easier to chew and digest.

Hoffman had been drinking heavily on-and-off for three or four days when, on February 19, 1990, he shot and killed Miller. An autopsy revealed Miller's blood-alcohol con-

centration at .44 at the time of her death. California defines a person with a BAC of .08 as drunk. Doctors testified at Hoffman's hearing that his victim had enough alcohol in her system to kill a normal healthy person.

Though Hoffman managed to call the police and confess to the killing, he claimed to be too intoxicated at the time of the incident to know what he was doing. The state disagreed, despite Hoffman's BAC registering at .28 hours after the shooting and police statements that he was so drunk after his arrest they had to stop interviewing him.

Hoffman, who would receive Social Security and veteran's benefits if he gets out, says he still hopes to see his grandchildren before he dies. "I love my family and miss them so much," he says. "Really, I'm 80 years old. It doesn't give me much more time. Maybe I can live four or five more years, but who knows?"

Reduce the population

Weinstein says the CDC needs to reduce the population to a manageable size for the department to create an adequate health-care infrastructure for prisoners. "We need to get down the number, first by letting out the elderly on compassionate releases, then second- and third-strikers," says Weinstein.

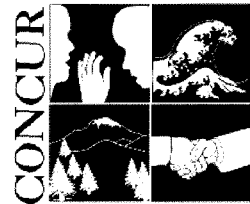
But J.P. Tremblay, a spokesman for Youth and Adult Correctional Agency Secretary Roderick Hickman, says that isn't going to happen. Noting the purchase of four new dialysis machines, he says the department continues to look at ways to provide more health-care services inside the prison, but the state has no plans to create a unit specifically for the elderly or allow

a large number of prisoners to walk.

"We are going to continue to look at each individual on a case-by-case basis," Tremblay says. "Some inmates have committed egregious crimes. Those are people we should not let out."

Few would dispute Tremblay regarding those who commit egregious crimes. Whether 80-year-old Clyde Hoffman, among others, fits inside that box is open to debate. 

Jonathan Jones is a student at the University of Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism. Send comments to comments@californiajournal.org



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The day the terror alert went to orange, many on the West Coast raised questions about political motives and consequences. Many on the East Coast made sure their cars were filled with gasoline.

Three years after the worst attack in the nation's history, an emotional schism remains between the two coasts. It's not that Westerners are oblivious to danger, nor Easterners driven by fear. Yet the long lines at airports and the armed guards patrolling bridges, buildings and public transportation make a lot more sense to the tens of millions of people who live under the flight paths taken by the terrorists on Sept. 11, 2001, than to those who live just as close to Pearl Harbor.

The *San Francisco Chronicle's* Washington bureau is located about two blocks from the IMF and the World Bank, two institutions identified in the latest warning as potential Al Qaeda targets. I have personally spoken to dozens, if not hundreds, of people who work in the vicinity, and I have not found a single person who does not take the threats seriously. There is no shortage of skepticism about the potential political gamesmanship involved and the timing of the announcements.

Nevertheless, when *The Washington Post* recently printed a chart of concentric circles showing the damage that could be inflicted by a single truck bomb, I — along with probably thousands of others working in downtown Washington — calculated my proximity to the nearest potential target.

In contrast, I couldn't name a single person on the West Coast who thinks seriously about such threats on a daily basis. The details in the Sept. 11 commission's final report about Al Qaeda's plans to blow up LAX around the millennium is typically greeted with derisive howls from Northern Californians whom I speak with on a regular basis — a sign of their perceived distance from the threat.

There is common sense underlying the different attitudes; it is a divergence that would disappear the moment the West Coast came under attack. That does not seem as likely as another assault on Washington, the seat of government, or New York, home to the world's largest financial institutions and the nation's largest concentration

of Jews. New York turned itself into a bunker to prepare for the Republican National Convention. Washington's loss of innocence has been steady and sad.

When I arrived at work here 11 years ago, Washington was hardly a wide open city. Yet with the exception of the White House and the Pentagon, the federal government was as accessible as the state house in Sacramento or City Hall in San Francisco. I went entire years without renewing my Capitol press credential, knowing that anyone

was welcome inside the "people's house," free to roam the halls, enter committee rooms and drop in on elected officials.

No longer. Today, I don't go anywhere near Capitol Hill without my red, holographic, photographic ID. Long lines greet visitors, who must pass through magnetometers and airport-style baggage searches. Since the orange alert was issued in the first week of August, all vehicles approaching either side of the Capitol must pass through a heavily fortified checkpoint. Military personnel with assault weapons patrol the subway, where trash cans and recycling bins — potential bomb receptacles — have long been removed.

Trucks delivering supplies to downtown buildings face routine inspection and are no longer permitted into many buildings' loading docks. To park in the public lot below my office, workers must prove they are employed in the building. Even running downstairs for a cup of coffee now requires that I bring some form of company ID to return to my desk.

The heightened sense of danger in the East is demonstrated in polls. A survey conducted by Hart/Teeter earlier this year found that 62 percent of New Yorkers are concerned that terrorists will commit acts of violence near where they live or work, as compared to 49 percent of Californians. The poll found that many more Easterners felt that terrorism will deeply touch their lives.

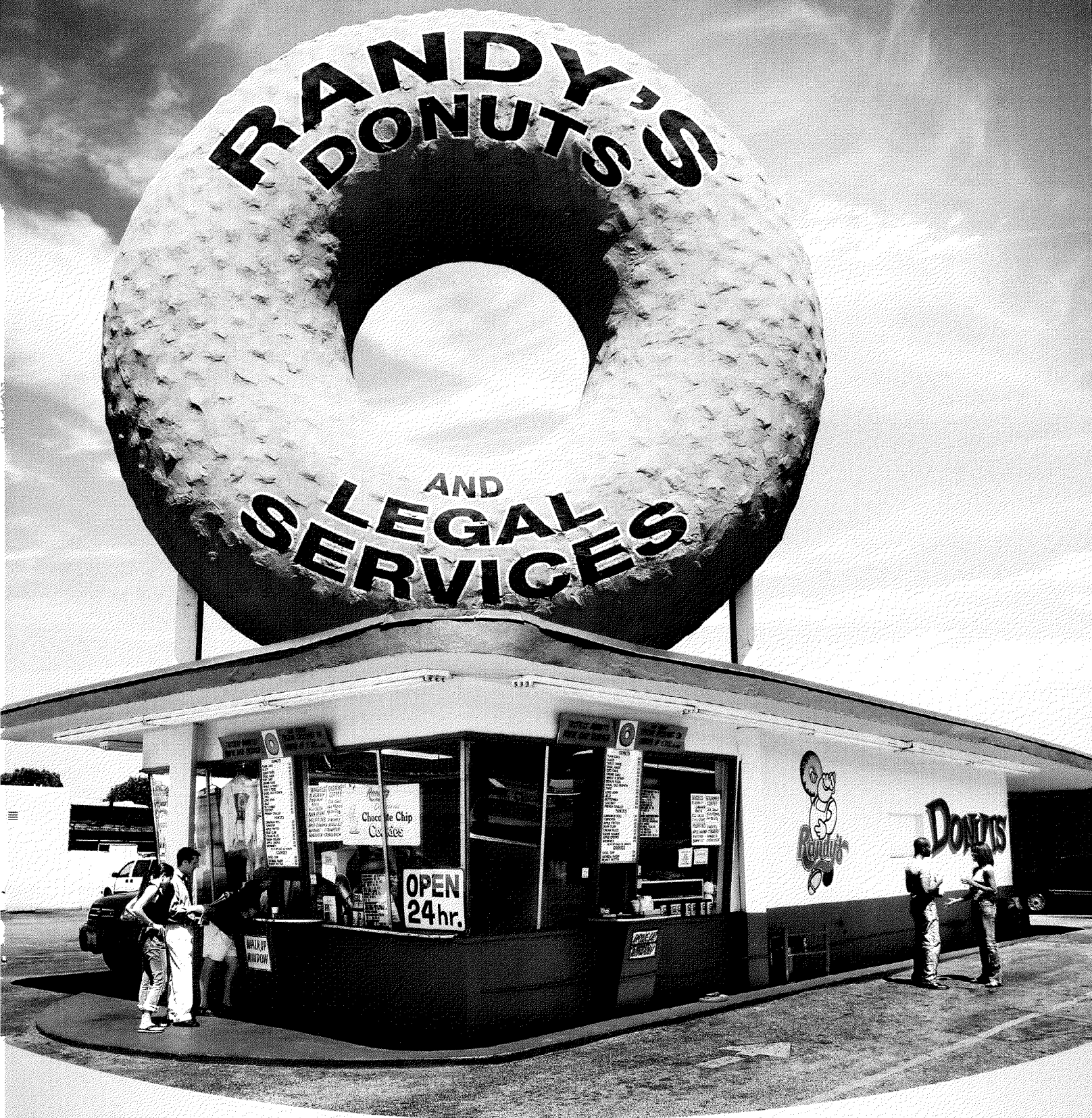
Come to Washington, and you will see that it already has. 

Contributing editor Marc Sandalow is the *San Francisco Chronicle's* Washington bureau chief. Send comments to comments@californiajournal.org

Three years after
the worst attack
in the nation's
history, an
emotional
schism remains
between the
two coasts.

by Marc
Sandalow





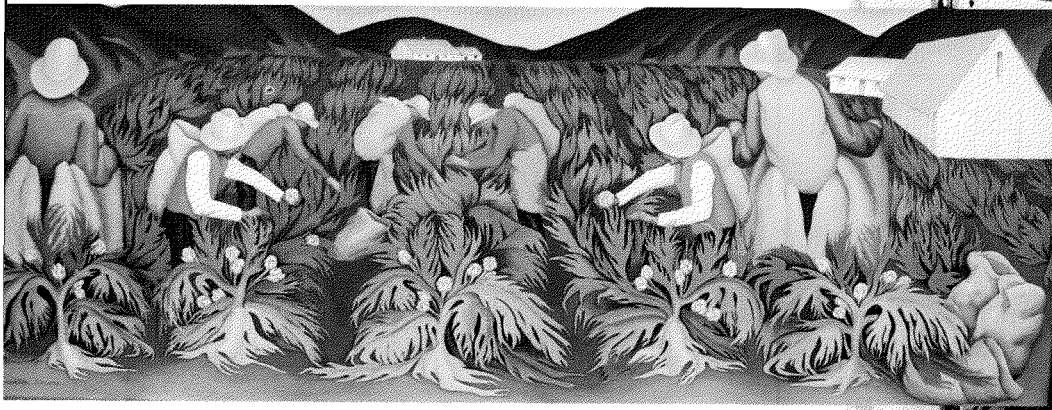
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It is evocative of the final scene in "Raiders of the Lost Ark" — a vast cavern filled with innumerable wooden crates, each storing some rare historical artifact. But this is no work of fiction. It exists in a West Sacramento warehouse, housing a treasure trove of Golden State history, from stagecoaches to murals to ancient Indian pottery and more.

By John Howard



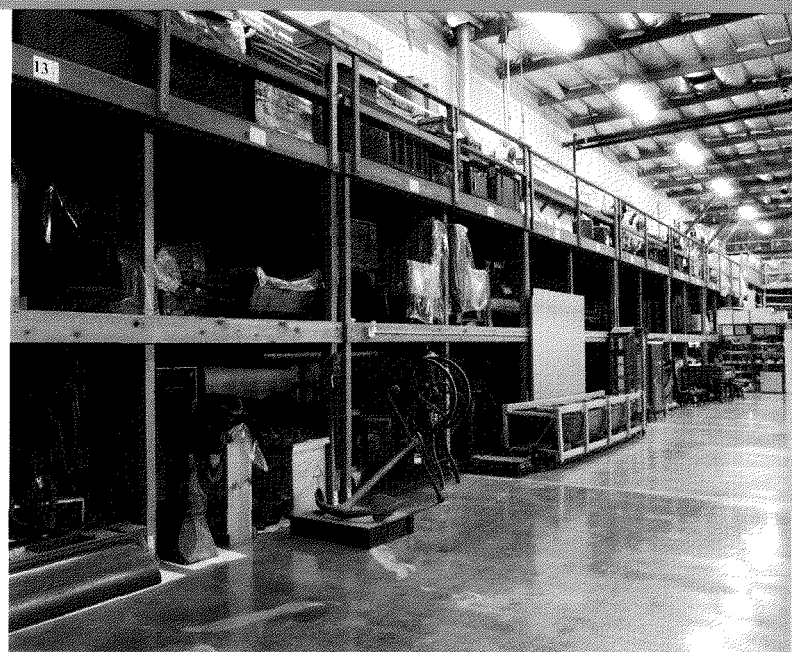
CALIFORNIA'S HISTO

Here, time freezes and memories simmer. The ghosts of history lurk in the shadows. This is Paradise Lost and Found: the state's cavernous warehouses in West Sacramento that conjure up visions of the final scene in Steven Spielberg's "Raiders of the Lost Ark."

Two nondescript state buildings, a total of 55,000 square feet cloaked in sophisticated security, house the stuff that dreams are made of. Officially known as the "California State Museum Resource Center," it is a sort of clearinghouse and purveyor of history, with some two million objects collected over more than a century.

"These are all donated," notes curator and director Betty Smart. "We have no budget to buy objects."

It is not a state museum. Unlike New York, Pennsylvania and all but four states, California has no official state-run, state-operated museum that encompasses the state's



Photos in this article by Steve Yeater



Pictured clockwise: "The Artichoke Pickers," a painting by Henrietta Shore; a stage coach that traveled between Grass Valley and Nevada; a collection of medicine bottles and tonics; a baby's cradle carved with the year 1604; and a glimpse down one row of the warehouses' stacks of artifacts.



GRASS VALLEY HISTORICAL WAREHOUSE



past. But it loans artifacts to museums and state parks, sacred relics to Native American tribes, art and furniture to state offices, help to academics, delight to school children and magic to nearly everybody, including Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, who borrowed a seven-foot-wide painting depicting a 19th-century century chuck-wagon race that hangs in his office. The center also has loaned exhibits to museums as far away as Utah and Australia.

The sheer quantity is numbing.

There are stagecoaches, firearms, beaded and sacred tribal garments, documents, woven baskets, saddles, flax wheels, portraits, firefighting equipment, pottery and inaugural gowns. There's more: murals, belts, desks, dining tables, letters, mirrors, beds, tools, knives, certificates, end pieces, side pieces, even a table and pair of Louis XV chairs from former First Lady Nancy Reagan. There is an exquisite, massive, Mexican-made silver-threaded saddle from San Diego — one of hundreds of donations from a local family.

There is a rough-hewn cradle — perhaps a prized possession of early pioneers — with the date “1604” carved into one end. There is 1,000-year-old Indian pottery, and at least 11,000 Indian baskets kept in a carefully air-conditioned room. There is a 150-year-old watchmaker's desk, complete with two dozen drawers, a secret compartment and its original tools and glass.

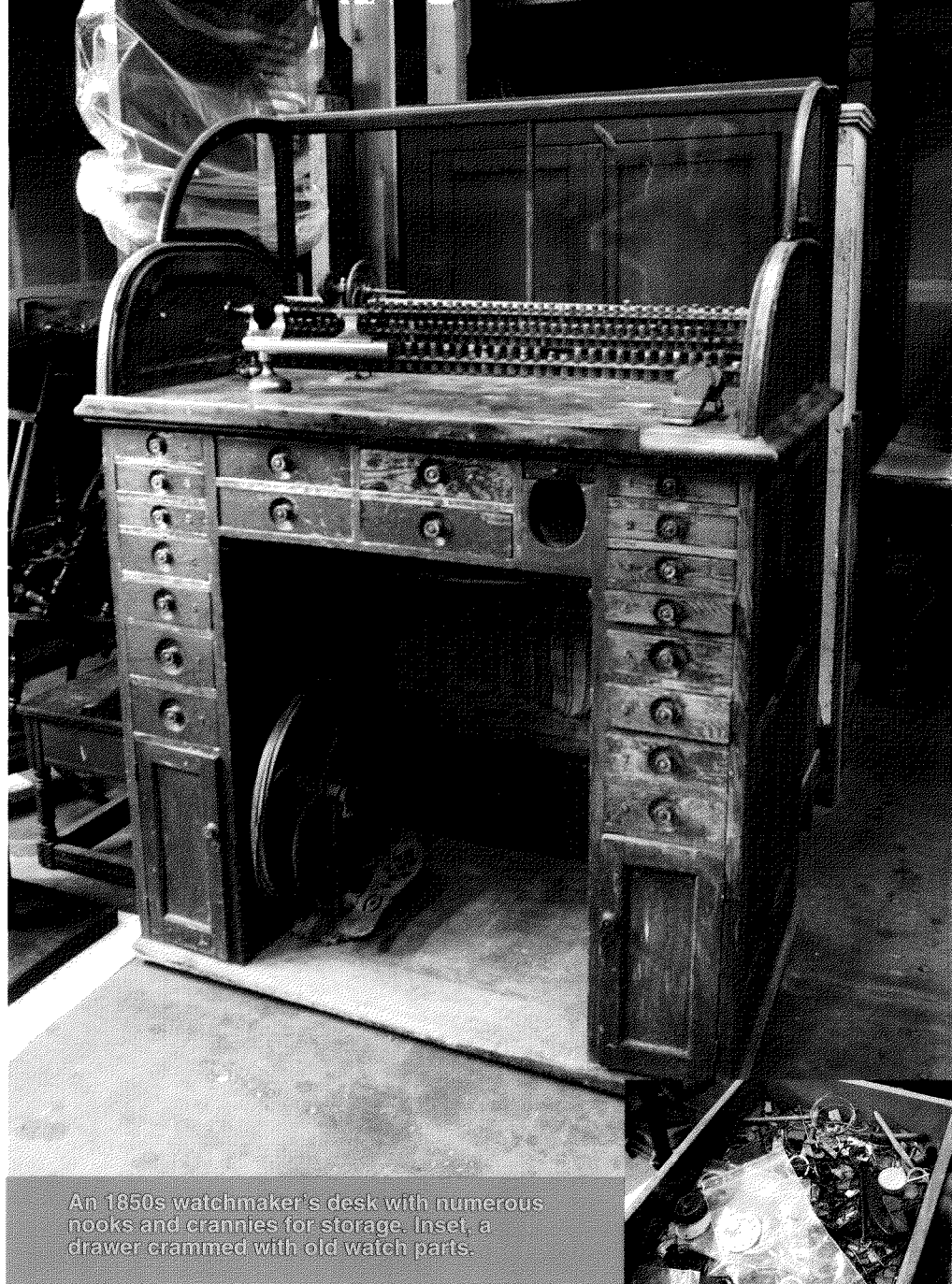
The warehouse is filled with nooks and crannies and alcoves and shelves and benches and chambers and cubbyholes and flat-drawer filing cabinets and huge racks on special rollers that move at a touch of the hand. There are thousands of photographs and negatives, including more than 40,000 images on the center's Web site (www.smrc.parks.ca.gov).

There is a room — off-limits to the public with no photographs allowed — crammed with historic weapons, including flintlocks, Winchester repeater rifles, a weird four-barrel shotgun called a “goose gun” donated by a Sacramento judge's family, pistols, swords and odd, finely detailed firearm replicas.

There are scores of boxes waiting to be unpacked, marked with felt pen, their treasures yet to be explored.

It is as close to paradise as antique and history lovers will ever get.

“And it all belongs to the people of the state of

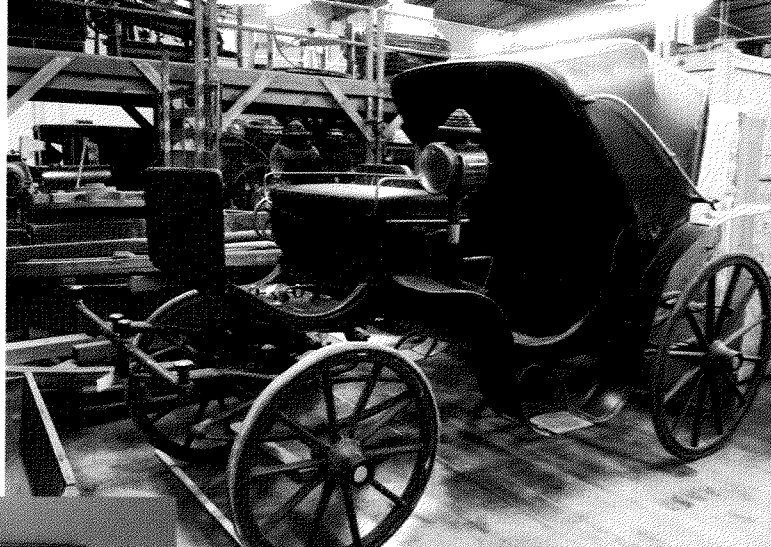


California,” said Smart, who heads a five-person staff and a revolving cadre of volunteers who busily organize, examine and identify the mountain of historical material. “From contact to acquisition to photography [of the object] to numbering to finding storage space — there's a lot of work to it.”

A tiny piece of the mountain: Four murals by Swiss-born Gottardo F. P. Piazzoni that were displayed in San Francisco Library's grand staircase for more than 30 years. The library didn't know what to do with them. The massive murals, each 12 feet high and four feet wide, depict California scenes — “Dawn,” “Night,” “The Mountain” and “The Forest.” Piazzoni, who wore a flowing cape and bow tie, completed the murals in 1945, shortly before his death. The huge oil paintings were mounted in April in a

display room at the center.

Another project is the restoration — expected to be completed next year — of the 19,000 square-foot Stanford Mansion at 8th and N streets in downtown Sacramento, family home of California's eighth governor, Leland Stanford. Furnishings for the home — down to such details as carpeting, end tables and chandeliers — are being collected at the center, based in part on room-by-room photographs of the original house. The home will be used by state protocol chief Charlotte Mailliard Shultz, wife of former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, to host visits by



An 1800s carriage used by the family of Gov. Leland Stanford.

sources but also to make a case for an official state museum. Currently, visits are by appointment only and tours are limited.

Given its wealth and colorful past, some historians are surprised that California has no official, state-run, state-operated museum. A number of institutions dedicated to pieces of the state's history exist — the State Railroad Museum, the State Capitol Museum, the California State History Museum and the African-American Museum, among others. Some are state-backed, but most are nonprofit, privately supported art and history institutions.



Warehouse curator Betty Smart stands before the 60-year-old Gottardo Piazzoni murals, which once graced the SF Public Library.

foreign dignitaries and other officials.

Since the 19th century, the state has acquired hundreds of thousands of objects, many as donations from wealthy families and their estates. By 1976, California decided to store its ever-expanding trove at a central location. Until the 1990s, the center's location was largely a secret, and even Capitol cognoscenti who knew of its existence had no idea where it was. Indeed, the vision of a state warehouse crammed with historical goodies had acquired the stature of an urban myth — just like that secret tunnel under the Capitol (which does exist, by the way).

But in recent years, state officials recognized the need to bring the center's collection out into the open, largely to enable the public to enjoy its vast re-



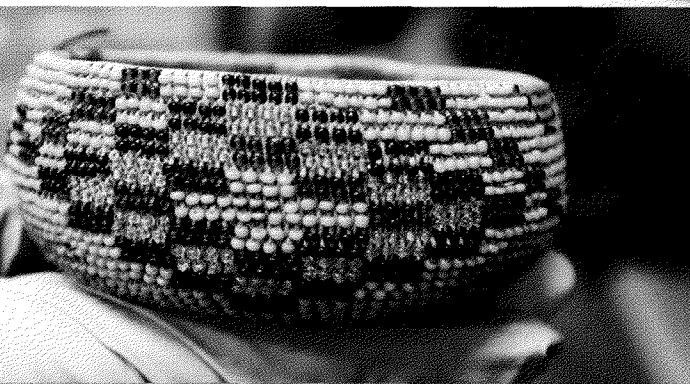
An elaborately detailed 19th-century fire wagon

California's world-class institutions — the Getty Museum, the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles, the Oakland Museum — all require private funds to operate.

California is in stark contrast to New York, where the state museum is the largest state-operated museum in the nation. A major research center, the museum is home to the Geological Survey, Biological Survey, Anthropological Survey and the Historical Survey. Oddly, too, California has no state-run historical society, as do many other states, although



Zuni Indian pottery



An exquisitely beaded Indian basket, one of 11,000 in the state's collection.

there is a state Office of Historic Preservation and the State Historical Resources Commission, which work to preserve the state's heritage. They do not operate museums.

The California Historical Society, based in San Francisco, is a private entity recognized by the Legislature as the state's official historic monitor. The society, at its own cost, publishes the state's historical magazine — a task that is government-backed in other states — and maintains a major library, museum and art and photography collection.

The California State History Museum — formerly the Golden State Museum — is located in the Office of the State Archives, the repository of official state documents, including the original state constitution and John Sutter's 19th century land grant. Its latest major exhibit, "California's Remarkable Women," was spearheaded by First Lady Maria Shriver and is based on archives documents.

Few doubt that a state-run museum would be desirable, although how it would be run, where it would be located, how much it would cost and what it would contain are huge questions.

"The bigger idea, the better idea is to create a cabinet-level arts and culture agency," said Stephen Becker, executive director of the California Historical Society. "That is far more important than fooling around with a show-and-tell with a bunch of objects. The objects are gorgeous, make no mistake — it's a wonderful collection. We all know that collection in West Sacramento must be taken care of and it should be shared more. But it needs more than the easy



A silver-embroidered saddle made in Mexico in 1898.

solution that we just build its own building. A museum is more than four walls and objects."

Schwarzenegger's plan to reorganize government included a new undersecretary for Parks, History and Culture within a proposed Natural Resources Department, as well as a "state museum system" that would consolidate state cultural heritage programs and museums. The plan, which needs the Legislature's approval, also recommended creating a nonprofit public corporation that would work with the state to help fund and operate museums.

"Someday," says Smart, "we could have a Smithsonian of the West."

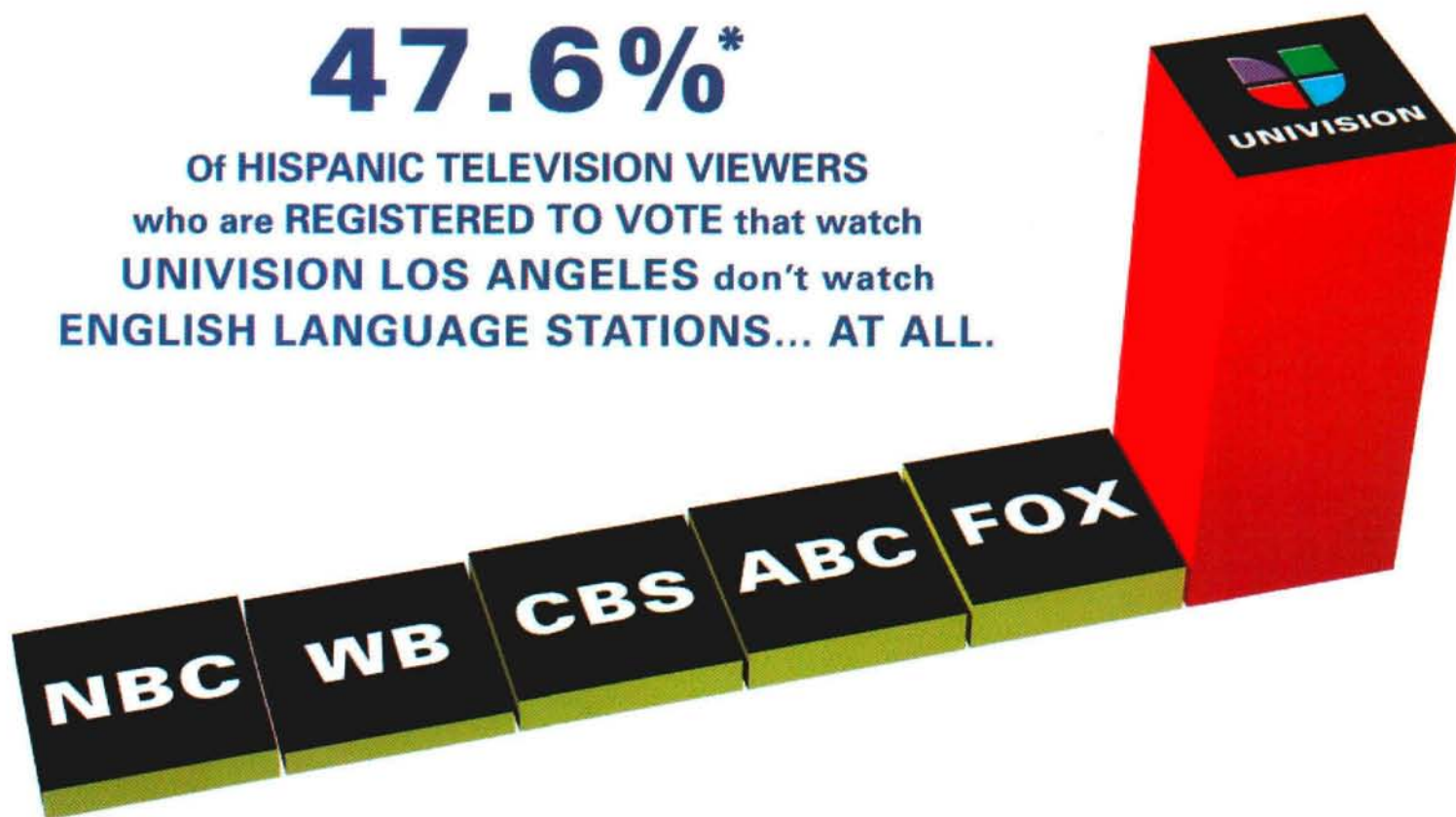
John Howard is senior editor of California Journal. Send comments to comments@californiajournal.org

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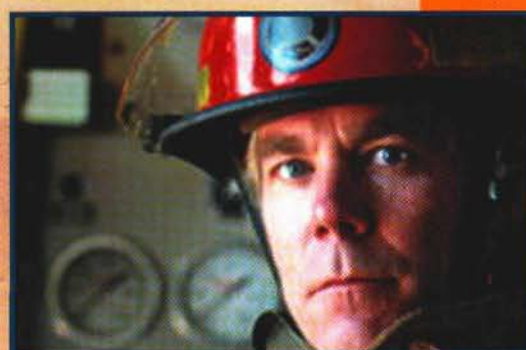
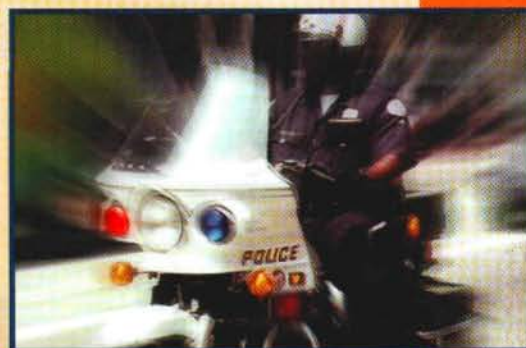
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